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THE LOGICAL ALTERNATIVE TO A MIRACULOUS CHRISTIANITY:  
OR, CAN THE GOSPEL MIRACLES BE AN OPEN QUESTION IN  
CHRISTIAN CHURCHES?

SOME years ago, it may be remembered, a young minister in one of the midland counties, finding his mind unsettled on the subject of the gospel miracles, proposed to his congregation to make that subject "an open question." His lay friends, however, replied, that to them, as a congregation of Christian worshipers, it was not an open question; and they requested his resignation. This having taken place, the next thing publicly heard of the young minister was that he was about to take orders in the Church of England, though not to find open questions more abundant there.

The suggestion having lately re-appeared in what assumes to be a representative periodical\* of the Unitarians, the *Christian Reformer* takes occasion to look once again freely and deliberately into the subject, with special reference to the latest aspects of the question.

If we were to ask, by way of analogy, Can gravitation be regarded as an open question among Newtonian philosophers? can the agency of water in depositing the stratified rocks be called an open question in geology? is monarchy an open question in this country, or republicanism in the United States? or did those brave men who once set up a Commonwealth in England insist upon being regarded as good Royalists notwithstanding?—we should be only expressing by analogy our inability to detach from our own conception of Christianity that of miracle as implied in it. But we shall endeavour to appreciate a different conception of the life of Jesus as presented by those who have critically attempted to detach the miraculous from it; and shall treat the whole subject with the calmest and coldest reasoning.

It is natural and necessary that the question of miracle should undergo the sternest examination in an age in which the laws of nature are well and widely understood, and when their regularity is part of the natural religion of well-informed men.

There is no doubt that there are in this country multitudes of persons, of Christian feeling and sentiment, and habitual attend-

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\* *Unitarian Herald*, Oct. 23, 1863.

ants on Christian worship, who reverence and love the Christ of the gospel history, admire his precepts and copy his example, but who are utterly perplexed and somewhat incredulous as to the record of his miraculous works and experiences, and who would like Christianity infinitely better if it did not require them to believe in miracles. To describe such persons as actively denying miracles would be incorrect. They usually have not leisure or scholarship enough for critical studies in biblical and general literature. So they have not really thought the question out. They have not attempted actually to separate the miraculous from the non-miraculous in detail, and to present to their own clear conception an unmiraculous gospel and an uninspired Christ. They have not asked themselves whether Jesus would be in any true sense Christ, or Master, or Lord, or Saviour, to them, if divested of his supernatural pretensions. They have not clearly ascertained that it is possible to detach from the idea of him his own belief in his own miraculous powers and endowments; or, while denying these themselves but granting that he believed them of himself, to retain the love and reverence which his character first won from them. But they must do this if they would work out their own views thoroughly.

It has ever been the distinguishing excellence of our English Presbyterian and Unitarian churches (for which we have been often complimented with orthodox taunts) that they can shelter and comfort men of less distinctly Christian convictions than their leaders and representatives; that, in fact, our thoughts of worship and our expositions of Christian duty are so thoroughly in harmony with the dictates of the human conscience and intellect, as to recommend themselves practically to any man whose religious and moral nature (in spite of intellectual difficulties) craves the refreshment of social worship apart from the dogmatism of a theology which would insult and wound him at every word. Ever be this one of the signs of our Christian liberality! Ever may we find this testimony in human nature around us to the truth and happiness of those views, for which we think we are indebted to the gospel of Christ! But it is a very different thing for a believer in Christianity as a miraculous revelation to declare his own fundamental Christian convictions to be *open questions* in our churches, for discussion between the believers and deniers of the miraculous.

In the arena of the world, the miracles of Christ are of course and must be still an open question. They are continually undergoing some fresh or varied or revived scrutiny. Every thinker ought to think this question out for himself till he has settled it to his own mind one way or the other. And when he has so thought it out, surely his acceptance of a miraculous Christ will lead him to place himself distinctly within the Christian church, or his rejection of a miraculous Christ will leave him the professed



disciple of natural religion. And if, in this latter case, he desires to participate in Christian worship on its broadest and most truly human basis, he will not be so unreasonable as to claim that the basis of that worship should be changed to suit him yet better. He may collect a church of natural religionists if he prefers.

With good men in such a state of mind we avow the most thorough sympathy. Their doubts are the intellectual product of their day; as their beliefs and religious feelings are the necessities of their own spiritual nature. But those who have the leisure and faculty for the task must desire to put their beliefs and denials into something like the orderly form of a philosophy, and especially to decide whether they can believe in miracles or not, and whether they can really accept Christianity without accepting its miracles. With such companions in thought we pursue this inquiry, desiring to grant everything that candour requires, and to hold nothing but in perfect liberality to all who differ.

The believer in miracles must grant fully and frankly their *à-priori* improbability in the light of modern physical and metaphysical science. He grants, he avows, that there is no reason for believing they ever happen *now*. He grants that those alleged to have happened in former days ought to be looked upon with philosophical suspicion. He knows that in unscientific days the more striking or rare phenomena of nature were ascribed to miracle through simple ignorance of the laws of nature. He feels that strong moral reasons, implying the same Divine Love to which as a Theist he ascribes the great abiding laws of nature, must be present even to command his interest in asserted miracles, anywhere or at any time; and such reasons he thinks recommend the Jewish and Christian dispensations to his inquiry. But no Theist, we may surely say, can lay it down that miracle is impossible. That Divine Will which acts uniformly through so many laws of its own appointment, must surely be free to act also beyond them.

Is a definition of miracle required? Men have always meant by it, *something above or beyond nature*; the *super-natural* is the *miraculous*. Of course what was miraculous to some ages has ceased to be so to others. By "above nature" men can only mean above nature *as they know it*. But the advanced knowledge of the laws or powers of nature makes the definition so much easier now than it might have been before the days of Bacon, Newton and Locke. What transcends the powers of nature *as nature is known to us*, if credibly attested to have been done eighteen centuries ago through human instrumentality, may safely be declared to have been miraculous. There are facts enough in the New Testament, which, if we but accept them as historical facts, must be declared, as the verdict of our better knowledge of the laws of nature, to have been supernatural. It is

beside the mark, therefore, to point to some other things in the New Testament, which may or may not, according as we conceive them to have occurred, have been properly miraculous. It is a sufficient definition of the miraculous to say, it is something occurring in ages long past, which our present philosophy shews us no law or power of nature competent to have produced.

The *miraculous* is thus another term for the *supernatural*. And here we have to protest against a growing laxity, or purposed ambiguity, in the use of the latter word, if not of the former also. We find men engaged in this argument using the term *supernatural* as synonymous with *spiritual* or *supersensual*. All clear thinkers ought carefully to avoid such an ambiguity of terms, especially where the words etymologically declare their own meaning.

The words *spiritual* and *supersensual* declare themselves to stand in contrast with what is *bodily, physical, material*, or cognizable by the outward *senses*.

The word *supernatural* as plainly stands contrasted with what is *natural* or produced by the *laws of nature*.

The *natural*, therefore, includes both the physical and the spiritual (or supersensual) to the *extent of our constant experience*; both classes of phenomena are equally accordant with the laws of nature, *physical nature and spiritual nature*.

And the *supernatural* correspondingly means all that is beyond or above the course of nature, whether of the physical nature or the spiritual nature.

Hence, to use this term *supernatural* as synonymous with *spiritual* or *supersensual*, is to confound words and becloud argument, or else quietly to beg the question which the believer in divine revelation sustains against the Deist. We may not pronounce whether it is through confusion of thought or with argumentative design that this confusion of phrase is often committed; but a gratuitous confusion it is. "What's in a name?" is it said? "A rose by any other name will smell as sweet and be a rose." In a name rightly used there is truth and equal ground of argument. In a name wrongly used there is deception or confusion. I would not call a rose a thistle, because I should be supposed to mean a thistle by those who use words in their customary meanings. With this explanation of terms, we may proceed with the argument.

In the Gospel history (to which our remarks will be confined, though applicable proportionately to the Mosaic, regard being had to their respective dates and the difference between the historical and the traditionary ages of the world),—in the gospel history, miracles of two kinds are recorded or implied: *spiritual* and *physical*. There are *miraculously inspired minds*, and there are *miraculous physical works done at their command*.

The question of miracles is too commonly narrowed to the



latter class. The difficulties seem to be felt in reference to these chiefly or solely. Yet the former are, so to speak, the central miracles of a revealed religion. The substance of the miraculous, superhuman revelation of God to man through Christ, consisted in the character, the words, the precepts, the promises of Jesus. These constituted the supernatural gospel to man; as the Mosaic monotheism was the central divine thought in the older revelation. There was the (spiritually) natural all around in the world's paganism and all that paganism implied; and also in the world's philosophy with all that philosophy could do, and all that she confessed herself unable to do. There was the (spiritually) supernatural, first in the Jewish faith in one Jehovah, and afterwards in Christ's revelation of the Heavenly Father and His will and purposes. The central miracles of Mosaism and Christianity are these great revealed beliefs, which prove themselves miraculous or supernatural by comparison with the contemporaneous natural religious ideas and practices of mankind. Yet the physical philosopher stumbles at the outward, bodily miracles of the gospel, and does not perceive that he has tacitly accepted the most stupendous *spiritual* miracles in the world—facts that Judaism sprang up amidst Paganism, and that Christianity sprang out of Judaism. Men in general are better versed in the laws of matter than in those of man. So they doubt Christ's power to heal the sick or raise the dead, because it is beyond the physical laws of nature; yet they do not perceive Judaism and Christianity to have been, in their respective growths, equally above and beyond the natural laws of man's intellect, conscience and religious instinct to have produced. If it be distinctly maintained, however, that these spiritual facts were not supernatural, but that Judaism and Christianity were the mere natural developments of human belief, like Buddhism, Manicheism, Stoicism, Epicureanism, Platonism and the rest,—then we cannot imagine why any one who thinks so should care to call himself Christian, rather than Stoic or Platonist. But we would refer him to Egyptian and Assyrian monuments and to Greek and Roman philosophy for contrasts of natural human belief. If the spiritual miracle and the physical be regarded as alike impossible or inadmissible, that position seems to us equivalent to proclaiming revealed religion impossible. The spiritually miraculous seems, to our apprehension, implied in the idea of Christianity as a divine revelation. Natural and revealed religion are well understood correlatives, harmonious but not identical.

The *physical or outward* miracles of the gospel may be considered under two aspects, (1) as belonging to its *evidence*, and (2) as belonging to its *facts or substance*.

As matters of primary *gospel evidence*, it would be a great mistake to adduce the miracles. They do not now prove the gospel true, but need to be themselves proved credible as parts of it. They may be perfectly credible, but they do not *cause*

credence. The lapse of time has changed their position in the order of evidence. A miracle in its own day might be a proof, but thus long after its own day it needs proving.

Accordingly, the usual order of conviction with thoughtful minds in the present day, we believe, is to begin with a perception of the *internal* evidences of Christianity in the character of Jesus, the elevation and loveliness of his theology, the purity of his moral precepts, the dignity of his idea of man as destined for eternal life. The external history of the gospel is next studied in its place in the history of the Roman empire and of the world. And when the gospel is thus accepted as to its spiritual contents and found to hold a due place in the world's history, the question then forces itself upon the thoughtful mind, whether the miracles of the gospel history are an essential part of that history, or are separable from the rest; and if inseparable, whether they are credible as a part of it, or make it incredible. We believe they are accepted usually under the feeling of the impossibility of separating them from the history without destroying all faith or reverence for Jesus and his historians, under a reasonable theistical belief in their abstract possibility, and with the thoroughly Christian feeling of their perfect harmony, in point of spiritual significance, with the whole doctrine and personal acts of Jesus. Thus the internal evidence of the gospel carries with it in the present day the conviction of its beneficent miracles. *Once* those miracles drew attention to the gospel message and challenged belief on its behalf; *now* the message leads us to consider the miracles. *Once, to the men of his own day*, they proved Jesus to be the Christ; but *now, to us*, the Christ accepted proves them credible while shewing them to be in harmony with his whole mission.

If the alternative is felt to be, to dishonour and discredit him whom for his own sake we have received into our reverential love, or else to regard miracles of mercy and divine power as a credible attendant on his divine mission,—though physical philosophy would, if deemed ultimate and supreme, press us to accept the former conclusion, our theistic perception of a Will above physical law may surely accept the latter. We consider this to be the reasoning process through which a thoughtful belief in the Christian miracles is usually gained.

But can we separate the miracles of Christ from the substance of the gospel history and yet leave the divine picture of Christ undamaged by their rejection? Or can we do it without so discrediting the gospel records themselves as to leave us practically in utter ignorance as to his life and work and pretensions? This is the practical question to which we come at last. Though the many devout and moral men whom we have described as accepting Christianity practically while doubting its miracles, have not *thought out a philosophy* on the subject, and are unconscious of logical inconsistency in their position, the matter has again and again been thought



out from their position into results which seem quite inconsistent with their practical reverence for Christ and Christianity. We shall now trace out cursorily the chief of these anti-miraculous systems of thought or theories of Christianity to their acknowledged results.

First: there is (or was, rather) what called itself the *natural* system of German Rationalism, most fully represented by Paulus. In the view of this system the *supernatural* was out of the question. The facts of the sacred writers may be adopted, but their opinion as to some of those facts being miraculous is uniformly disputed. Paulus "explains away every trace of immediate divine agency, and denies all supernatural intervention." "The effects which Jesus produced are not miracles, but acts sometimes of benevolence and friendship, sometimes of medical skill, sometimes also the results of accident and good fortune" (Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, I. 19). "He opened the New Testament to discover its meaning in the same way as he would have opened Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to explain them to his pupils" (Saintes, *Hist. of Rationalism*, p. 198). Yet Paulus professed to regard the gospel narratives as *historical*. But Christians in general felt that such a mode of interpretation virtually took away all credibility from the record, and made Christianity a name without reality. Even learned German critics felt that it was a most uncritical and truly *unnatural* explanation of the books in question; that it was not historical, but conjectural. So the *mythical* theory of Strauss began to take its place. This mode (Strauss himself declares) "leaves the substance of the narrative unassailed; and instead of venturing to explain the details, *accepts the whole, not indeed as true history, but as a sacred legend*" (Vol. I. p. 32). So, one by one, he examines the New-Testament miracles, pouring just contempt upon Paulus's *historical* but anti-supernatural explanations, and offering a *myth* instead. The feeding of the multitude in the desert mythically represents the spiritual bread from heaven; and the water made into wine at Cana reproduces Moses smiting the rock; the cures of the leper, the deaf and the blind, are mythological fictions to correspond with Jewish figurative prophecy; the resuscitations of the dead were "traditions without historical foundation." Strange to say, Strauss believed, or affected to believe, himself a sound Christian theologian by right of his mythical theory. He declares "that the essence of the Christian faith is perfectly *independent of his criticism*. The supernatural birth of Christ, his miracles, his resurrection and ascension, *remain eternal truths, whatever doubts may be cast on their reality as historical facts*" (Pref. xi). "The real state of the case (he says) is this: The church refers her Christology to an *individual* who existed historically at a certain period; the speculative theologian to an *idea* which only attains existence in the *totality of individuals*;—by the church the evangelical narra-

tives are received as *history*; by the critical theologian they are regarded for the most part as *myths*" (Vol. III. p. 441).

To most readers, at least out of Germany, the alleged facts if disproved historically must cease to seem "eternal truths." Christianity, if not historically true, can in no sense be true to common understandings, because it professes to be a history. Strauss himself indeed seems intuitively to have felt something of this kind, as he professed to write the life of *Jesus*, not of *Christ*. With him, *Jesus* is mythical; *Christ* is not recognized except as a church idea of later times. But myths and ideas, substituted for historical facts, are still called "eternal truths of Christianity"! Strauss's theory was, however, felt by its author to be not very easily applicable to the New Testament, by reason of the little interval between its events and the understood date of the records; so it was essential that he should date the composition of the Gospels *as late as possible*, in order to give some little opportunity for the myths to grow up. The assignment of the second century for their origin would probably never have been thought of, but for the necessities of this theory. And even thus, the theory is preposterous in its attempt to treat the gospel narratives like the long antiquated myths of Greece, or even like the traditional parts of the early Jewish history.

The latest attempt to explain Christianity without allowing its miraculous claims is that of M. Renan in his *Life of Jesus*. He disdains alike the naturalism of Paulus and the myths of Strauss. He banishes miracle at once from history without a word of argument; and then endeavours to reproduce a living picture of Jesus in what he considers its natural and intelligible form. He accepts the four Gospels as productions of almost the earliest date ever assigned to them; but he takes great liberties with their contents, accepting, rejecting and transposing at his pleasure. His book is fascinating in style; only too easy reading for a scientific, historical or religious inquiry. To the New-Testament critic it is highly valuable for its vivid pictures of scenery and manners, in Galilee especially, but also in Jerusalem. But as an ideal life of Jesus, what is it? An enigma, a contradiction, or a monstrosity. The gentle, amiable, nature-loving Prophet of Galilee, through whose heart and soul the hills and trees and waters discoursed holy music as on the responsive strings of an Æolian harp, becomes, in these pages, by turns an enthusiast, an ascetic, a monk (by anticipation), a Messiah and Son of David (though knowing himself to be neither), a Thaumaturge (not spontaneously, but quite unresistingly, and with a sagacious view to success), a demagogue, a cynic, a religious fanatic, a political desperado! Yet from first to last the biographer loads him with words of homage, admiration and love, which, if appropriate at the beginning of a course so conceived, should have been dropped long before the end so described.



Renan calls him a great soul, an original genius, the inventor of the parable, and the discoverer of the absolute religion which makes God our Father. But he also calls him ignorant, narrow, and a mere Jew. He instinctively avoids calling him *the Christ*. He, like Strauss, writes the life of *Jesus*, not the life of *Christ*. Christ and Christian are words without meaning to one who sees the New-Testament history under his point of view. M. Renan would not feel it a compliment to be called a Christian. He is a philosopher. We press this point seriously on those who allow themselves to talk of Christianity and Christ as quite separable from the miracles. Those who have systematically eliminated the miraculous from the New Testament, describe the residue not as a life of Christ, but as a life of Jesus. They find their logical alternative in natural religion. And they are logically consistent, we must think.

What do we mean by *Christ*, *Christianity* and *Christian*? We, calling ourselves *Christians*, thereby acknowledge Jesus as *our Christ*. And what do we mean by calling him *our Christ*? The *Christ* is the *Messiah*, the "anointed one." A figurative Jewish term, doubtless; but what does the figure mean *in his use of it and that of his apostles*? "Anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power;" "Lord;" "Master;" "Teacher;" "Saviour;" "speaking the words which he had heard from God;" doing "with the finger of God works which none other man could do;" "*Christ*, the power of God and the wisdom of God;"—such are the explanations of his claims offered at the fountain-head.

Can we doubt that he claimed to be the Christ? or that his apostles preached him as such? or that he and they alike meant to assert thereby that he had a supernatural commission as God's messenger to man? If any one does doubt it, far be it from us to withhold from him the Christian name. A Christian is one who thinks he has found the Christ, and accepts him as he thinks Christ intended to be accepted. If any one thinks that Jesus meant so to be received, he is right in calling himself a disciple. Only we have never read such a theory in any book of theology, nor ever heard of it in conversation. Even Renan falls far short of this.

But if any patient and competent critic of sacred literature should adopt the belief that Jesus Christ himself regarded his mission as purely unmiraculous, let him from that point of view present his yet newer and more philosophical exposition of the New Testament, in order to work out the theory in detail. We can well imagine that in doing so he must reject and transpose very freely with Renan, *naturalize* away a great part of the residue with Paulus, and *mythologize* the rest of the miraculous with Strauss, before he can approach any such result. And though, as matter of duty to truth, we should feel bound to study any such theory if seriously and reverently propounded;

and though, of course, we may not prejudge its hypothetical details, we cannot imagine that its hypothetical author would feel that there was any object or meaning left in calling himself a Christian, or wishing others to become so. We fancy he would thenceforth place the New Testament on the literary shelf with Plato and Cicero (and perhaps read the latter two with the greater interest and advantage), and go to great nature and his own soul in search of religion.

Such, we believe,—guided by the leading critical and philosophical theories thus far attempted,—are the logical alternatives to the admission of the miraculous in Christianity. Are they consistent with discipleship? Do they not abolish reverence for the Saviour? Those who accept them know best.

In accepting the gospel, together with its miracles as an inseparable portion, we do not feel that we evade any of the just claims of criticism or philosophy. The free criticism of the New Testament may indeed shew us various things that do not seem necessarily supernatural, though related in a way that seems to imply that they were thought so by the writers. It may lead us to doubt whether certain reported scenes were literal facts, or were even meant by the writers to be regarded as facts (or not rather as visions), such as Christ's temptation, and the appearance of Moses and Elias at the transfiguration. It may well hint to us to notice the chasm of time and the diversity of idea which separate the story of the birth and infancy from the rest of the gospel narrative, and give us leave to admit the element of wondering tradition (whether called *myth* or not) as reflected back after sixty years upon the obscure birth of one who had been unknown to public view till the thirtieth year of his age, but who from that time lived in such a blaze of public interest, zeal and enmity, as to defy the mythical theory thenceforth. But the freest criticism leaves us still convinced that Jesus professed to teach with an authority derived from miraculous inspiration; and his words and life verify to us the claim to its fullest extent. Then, when we find that this inspired Christ, ever "in the bosom of his Father," as he walks on his divine mission among men, is outwardly encompassed with a power of beneficent miracle, that with a word or symbolical act he heals the sick, gives sight to the blind, brings back the lost intellect, or restores the dead to mourning friends, we feel that such deeds are as suitable to him (and they look just as spontaneous and easy in his hands) as any little acts of mutual kindness are between man and man. We do not feel that these wonderful works are in moral opposition, but in strictest harmony with his office and character as the Christ. We notice especially that they are usually done in connection with the manifestation of *faith* on the part of those more or less directly benefited; and that faith, as described in the New Testament, is equivalent to *religiousness of mind*. We find no



room for the assertion (sometimes made with a view to discredit the miraculous facts) that faith was the *cause* of the miracles; but we see it recognized by Christ as the *occasion* or *moral prerequisite* for their bestowal. The faith was as often exercised by another person as by the sufferer himself; and in the case of the insane, the epileptic or the dead, faith on the part of the subject of the miracle was out of the question. But when Jesus praised the centurion's faith and cured his servant on its account; when he bade Jairus trust, and raised his little daughter from death; when he said to Martha, "Only trust, and thou shalt see the glory of God;"—we recognize the expression of the same moral and devotional spirit in which, on other occasions, he pronounces forgiveness on the faith of a penitent, and promises acceptance to the faith breathed in sincere prayer. Such faith is the condition of spiritual blessings, whether natural or miraculous. Similarly, too, Jesus makes this same faith, this trusting, loving religiousness of heart, the condition on which his apostles shall exercise miraculous power in behalf of his gospel. Thus we find the miraculous of Christ's outward history to be in perfect *moral* harmony with its acknowledged inward spirit. He is one and indivisible in our idea; his life is harmonious and consistent in its natural and supernatural manifestations.

The above remarks have been purposely made in as dry and critical a tone as possible. We have endeavoured to speak of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God," in regard to those controversial issues which seem to us to involve its truth or falsity, as calmly as we might have discussed the Demon of Socrates. We have spoken of the Christ of our own highest reverence as if he were no more to us than Socrates. We have also suppressed the feeling of deep sorrow which, as Unitarian Christians, we feel in thinking that occasion should be given to confound our theological position with that of the German anti-supernaturalists. It would be a grievous injustice to our body in general that such an impression should prevail. But, worse far,—worse for the gospel, and worse for the free growth of the human mind,—it would be the greatest possible obstruction to the progress of a free theology in this country. If it should appear that the denomination which has been longest devoted to free scriptural inquiry is now fast receding from the belief in a miraculous Christianity, the Independents and Baptists, who are next in the order of freedom, and who have already made some progress in mitigating the harsher dogmas of orthodoxy, will soon hark back into the shelter of creeds and dogmatism; and the awakened liberality of the Church of England also will be terrified into similar suppression. The excesses of the French Revolution, though they did not cause the true friends of liberty to doubt their own principles, threw back the progress of those principles full half a century. Extreme suggests extreme. We would

not have rational Christianity put back, as political freedom has been.

Nor would we, for our own sake, needlessly often trace and retrace the theories, so damaging to Christian reverence, which it may be the irksome duty of every intelligent Christian once for all to examine in outline, though he may well shrink from their details. We feel, with Professor Norton, that something is due to Christian reverence, where it would be granted to common friendship. "If one were to submit to hear the character and conduct of his most intimate friend canvassed and questioned at great length, in the manner in which Strauss discusses the history of our Lord, he might find it difficult to feel for him the same confidence and respect as before." (*Internal Evidences of the Genuineness of the Gospels*, p. 102.) And such precisely would be the result of attempting to keep the Christian miracles an open question within the church itself.

#### THE CLAIM TO INSPIRATION MADE BY THE WRITERS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Is the Bible the word of God, and therefore in every point infallible? Does it not rather record and treat of divine revelations? In the third Gospel, for example, the writer narrates the life and lessons of Jesus, mentioning, among other similar declarations, his avowal that "the Spirit of the Lord God was upon him;" but it does not appear that Luke was inspired to make this statement. He writes at the instigation of his own judgment, and with the qualification of "having had a perfect understanding of the things most surely believed" by the church, "even as they delivered them who had been eye-witnesses and ministers of the word." Luke writes concerning one inspired, but he gives no hint that his own knowledge of Christ's history was an inspired knowledge, or that God was miraculously writing in, or superintending, the language that he employed. In the same manner, an apostle filled with the Spirit and endowed with great revelations may write of these, and may faithfully describe them, without being necessarily inspired in the act of writing. The apostles were inspired men, but it does not follow from this fact that every thought in their minds must have been infallible truth, and that every word they uttered forms a portion of the word of God.

It has been remarked that "religion is more concerned in having proof for the authenticity and genuineness than for the inspiration" of the Holy Scriptures. If we have reason to believe that they contain a faithful record of the teaching and the faith of men divinely qualified to preach the word of God, we are chiefly interested to learn from them what that was, to see that we quite



understand them, and then to apply the truth thus obtained to the particular circumstances of our own time. In dealing with these ancient records, which come to us from different periods of history, all of them in numberless respects so unlike our own, we may expect some difficulties. There are natural difficulties in such a case; of a kind, therefore, which need not appal the most eager and devout faith. If we study the Scriptures with diligence, with reverence for their saving truth, and with the spiritual penetration which the nature of their subjects demands, we may be able in time to solve all difficulties in their interpretation to the fullest satisfaction of the pious reason. Let it only be clearly understood that what our Christian faith and assurance requires is this, that we should arrive at the mind of God as it was conveyed to those whom his Holy Spirit instructed, and truly learn from them all that they were inspired to teach.

The examination we are about to make of the claims which the New-Testament writers put forth, will only refer incidentally to the substance of what they taught, and nothing will be said relating to the question of the reality and the value of the inspiration which nearly the whole of them received as disciples and apostles of Christ. We are simply to inquire whether their actual compositions are inspired; and we propose to shew that the doctrine of the inspiration and consequent infallibility of their writings is a doctrine supported by no professions of the writers themselves, and that it is out of harmony with the general character of their productions.

This doctrine is argued from *à-priori* considerations of the supposed superior value of writings guaranteed by the Holy Spirit to be entirely free from error. Such an idea was perhaps necessary in the rude times of the earlier Christianity. They would probably have preserved to us little of productions so far above their comprehension in their true spiritual simplicity as the New-Testament writings were, if they had not believed them to be in every letter divine. It was clearly a natural idea to an age which degenerated so rapidly into asceticism and the worship of saints and relics, and all the bigotries of priestly rule. But it has no scriptural basis. The New-Testament writers never claim for either their words or their reasonings the divine infallibility which has been assumed for them. They wrote as men who knew what they were writing about, and who felt that the doctrine they taught was divine; but they never pretend that every form of thought into which this doctrine was thrown was fixed for them by the Holy Spirit. They wrote, on the contrary, under a manifest sense of personal responsibility for faithfulness to the truth they had to deliver; and with the full conviction that what they wrote was in very deed and truth their own.

The theological dogma is a misconception of certain texts in the Gospels. Christ promised to the disciples that the Holy

Spirit should teach them what to say when they should be brought before the judgment-seats of persecuting princes. The position is quite conceivable. He would encourage them with the promise of divine support under extreme trial, such as this must have been to uninstructed men. What *can* this have to do with any theory of inspiration in their calmer writings? or if it supports any, it supports the verbal theory, when Christ declares, "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of my Father in you."

The other texts are those relating to the Comforter, "who shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." "He shall guide you into all truth." "He will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine and shew it unto you." This is altogether another matter. Believe that the apostles were so instructed; that is not our present question. We are assuming their inspiration so far as concerned the complete knowledge of the gospel they had to communicate. This is all that such a promise can imply. We are speaking now of their conveying that knowledge to others, which we perceive in their writings to have been in the natural, common way. Admit that all their knowledge of Christ was supernaturally given them, their mode of teaching Christ was subject to the ordinary law of the transmission of ideas and impressions. On that point these texts from St. John are clearly silent.

What line can be drawn between the verbal inspiration of ancient belief and any modern theory of sentimental inspiration? None that we can perceive that is not to the disadvantage of the latter. People ask for certainty in holy scripture, absolute freedom from error; then the words must be dictated, as well as the ideas, if there is any dictation at all, or you can never be sure. The modern, compromising theories are simply weak and illogical. They do nothing, but, like most modern theological dogmatizing, get under safe shelter from direct assault, missing all the advantage of the older and more thorough views.

Theologians talk of degrees of inspiration, but to what purpose? We can never know what is more inspired and what less, and even if we could it would make no difference. They still assume that the whole is infallible, as truly as under the most extreme plenary theory. All pretences of discrimination between inspiration of direction, of suggestion, of superintendence or of sanction, are but the shallow covering of this assumption—that, any how, there can be no mistake in what they call the word of God. But this is the very assumption that hinders the real study of the Scriptures, and that leaves them always open to successful infidel inroads; for it is to expose the whole fort to assault in every weakest part of it, and a single breach made in it, however small, brings it down like a house of cards.

It becomes a different question when this idle assumption is



laid aside, that you are to find in every line of the Scripture the inspiration of God. There is no just reason to believe that the writings we call the New Testament are in any proper sense as writings inspired, though they develop and set forth inspired truth throughout. They are the productions of inspired men, as these themselves declare. They tell us how they became inspired, how far their inspiration reached, and for what great ends it was given. We ought to be able to learn more truly on such a matter from themselves than we could possibly understand from any *à-priori* assumptions of what theologians have imagined the necessities of the case required.

Then we assume the inspiration of the men who wrote the books of the New Testament. They assert this of themselves, and we are only at present inquiring into their own testimony on the subject. They declare that they were possessed of divine truth which they did not learn by common observation or study, or in any way of ordinary thought. It was God's gift to the world through them, a lamp which the spirit of Christ within them kept bright and luminous. This was the real superiority of the New-Testament writers to the fathers who followed them; for there is scarcely one of these, hardly excepting even the best of them, Clement of Rome, in whose mind the light was not early obscured by jejune follies of affected wisdom, the word-play of idle fancy. The light burned clear in the fresh memory of Christ, but it was a most distracted time, and we do not know if even its best uninspired thought has survived.

We say nothing of *his* claim to inspiration to whom the Spirit came in unmeasured fulness. He gave God's truth to his followers, whom he appointed stewards of the mysteries of God,—stewards, as St. Paul declares, with whom it is their first duty to be faithful.

But if we read what has been left by James, Peter and John, we shall perceive that they write—they only profess to write—as witnesses of Christ and Christ's doctrine. That was the meaning of their call to the apostolate: "Ye shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." Luke puts their duty in the same light in recording their choice of Matthias to fill the place of the betrayer. "Of these men which have accompanied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us . . . must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." The leading apostles, who seemed to be pillars, as Paul says,—James, Cephas and John,—knew the religion which Christ had taught. They write as those who knew, and they affect to do nothing more. Peter presents himself as a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and John rests upon his assured knowledge of the mind of God in Christ. "We are of God; he that is of God heareth us;" remembering perhaps the very language of the Master, "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that

receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me." But neither of them has the idea that it is not he that writes, but a higher power dictating to him. "That which we have seen and heard we declare unto you." So in the Acts of the Apostles, the same three prominent speakers speak always in the attitude of witnesses. They understood what they had to declare and teach; they had the inspiration of this clear knowledge of the truth respecting Christ and of all the lessons he gave them. This is what they invariably claim; but to any theory beyond this their manner of speech gives no support. As to the Gospels, they make no pretension at all beyond the literary claim of fidelity in Luke, and that of a true doctrinal witness in John, a claim that is made for him by others in the concluding chapter. Mark and Matthew are altogether impersonal; and of the whole three synoptic Gospels it may be safely affirmed that they each combine the current recollections of their special time and locality, without pretending to constitute more than the most faithful and serviceable record which could there and then be constructed of the deeds and sayings of the Son of Man. We have chiefly to do, then, with Paul. In him we shall find all we seek,—the design and the limits of inspiration, and all the means of judging for ourselves the depths and realities of apostolic sentiment. He claims throughout his writings to have received his knowledge of the gospel by a special and peculiar inspiration. The circumstances of his call to the apostleship, and the new and difficult ground he had to tread, rendered it proper and even necessary for him to bring this claim into prominence. He is, too, the most copious of the New-Testament writers. We may expect to find in him all the phenomena of inspiration fully exemplified.

Now in this apostle the distinction is very marked between the divine knowledge he declared himself to possess, and his own human, natural way of conveying that knowledge to others. That he was competent to teach the gospel of Christ he affirms and carefully proves. If he had been inspired beyond this, we may well believe that he would have said so, since he was often obliged to dwell so strongly upon the authoritative force of what he taught. He not only gives no hint of the kind, but writes from first to last like a man conscious that he is using not only his own words, but his own forms of thought. He gives the impression of one full of zeal, labouring to the best of his ability and judgment, by appeals and exhortations, by illustration and reasoning, to impress the truth upon the various classes of minds to which his letters are addressed.

Let us look first, then, at the claim which this apostle really makes for himself. He appeals continually to an authority beyond and above his own; and the fact of this perpetual appeal determines the attitude in which he stands, that of one writing humanly, though his discourse is of things divine.



First, he declares himself to have been divinely called to the apostleship, to be an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, separated from his birth in the mind of God to this work,—a claim made probably with the view of shewing that the other apostles who had been called in time before him were not on that account more truly apostles than he. He puts the formula of his claim very explicitly in writing to the Galatians, amongst whom his apostleship had been placed in competition with that of the twelve. We paraphrase the words to express what seems the full sense of the passage. “Paul, an apostle not of men . . . but of God the Father, nor by means of man, but by the instrumentality of Jesus Christ.” This is his summary way of reciting the story recounted in the Acts of his miraculous conversion and call, by the appearance to him of the risen Lord. He even protests in the first letter to Timothy, so little does he feel himself actually writing the words or thoughts of another mind than his own, that in saying that he was ordained a preacher and an apostle, he is indeed speaking the truth in Christ and not uttering a falsehood.

What is implied, then, in this apostolic call? In the Acts, speaking before Agrippa, Paul recites the words in which Christ spoke to him: “I have appeared to thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those in which I will appear to thee.” This account may be accepted as at least in complete harmony with Paul’s own writings. He was to testify to the risen Lord. He did this on all occasions, and he was to preach in connection with this fact a doctrine respecting it, a gospel founded upon it, with regard to which he would hereafter be more fully instructed.

The witness to Christ and the resurrection was the first thing which the duty of an apostle implied. Peter dwells upon this. “We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” “We are his witnesses of these things.” John says, “We declare unto you that which we have heard and looked upon and our hands have handled of the word of life.” So Paul: “Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?” And of the resurrection he says: If the dead rise not, and Christ be not risen, “we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ.” “Last of all he was seen of me also.”

This testimony which Paul gives to the resurrection suggests a question which it may be well, by the way, to ask, as to how much of this apostle’s Christian knowledge was granted to him as a direct revelation, and how much he learned in communication with those who were in Christ before him. Let us just note two or three things. In referring to precepts of morals and to Christian institutes, he often seems to be speaking as if of what he had learned from other Christians to have been the lessons and

ordinances of Christ. He refers to "the words of Christ," and to "commandments of the Lord" which had originated certain common practices of all the churches. There is much in Paul's writings which seems to reflect those earlier oral or written accounts of Christ's deeds and discourses which afterwards framed the synoptic Gospels. "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." "The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night." "If we deny him, he also will deny us." "The Lord knoweth them that are his, and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity,"—almost a portion from the Sermon on the Mount, as are, too, such passages as these: "Bless them that persecute you." "Render to none evil for evil." "Forgive one another, as God in Christ hath forgiven you." "Instant in prayer." "Be not wise in your own conceits." And still further we remark one special instance in which Paul gives his own opinion, but introduces it with the distinct commandment of Jesus, that "the wife should not depart from her husband." "To the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord." In his first letter to Timothy, Paul expressly speaks of "wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ," as "the doctrine according to godliness;" and, when exhorting the Ephesians against wicked courses, he adds, "Ye have not so learned Christ, if ye have heard him and been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus,"—as though he had in his mind a distinct body of Christian, moral instruction already extant.

With reference to the facts of Christ's life and death, the Pauline Epistles give few examples of the way in which the apostle preached about them; but the few which occur might be referred most naturally to the teaching of the church, not perhaps to the direct teaching of the apostles to himself,—since to the Galatians he seems to deny that the twelve had taught him anything, if we are not overstraining the passage, and if he does not mean more there than what related to his Gentile commission,—but the teaching of his fellow-christians, say at Antioch, or at Tarsus, where he lived so long after his conversion before he began to preach. One of the most important references which Paul makes to Christ's history is his account of the way in which the Lord's Supper was instituted, which does not read like a revelation, but as the record of a fact that had been competently related to him. "I delivered unto you that which I also received, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed," &c. Another is the statement about the resurrection, in which again Paul refers to facts such as he might at least have learned, and we should say probably did learn, from the testimony of various others, and among these from some of the twelve. "I delivered unto you"—the same formula as before—"that which I also received,—how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, &c., that he was seen of Cephas,



then of the twelve, then of five hundred of the brethren,"—and here he pauses to say, what he knows for a present fact, that the majority of these were still living,—“then of James, then of all the apostles (meaning the eleven), and last of all by me also.” All this is recited as if from a recollection of facts that had been related to this apostle. The reading of it gives clearly that impression, and it seems extremely against probability that Paul should have learned by direct revelation facts, or should have been impelled by direct inspiration to establish in the churches he planted rules and ordinances, with which the common mind of apostolic Christendom was already at the time familiar in the very places where he had so long lived before his Gentile mission began. The question is an important one in this respect, that there may be more reason than has been commonly supposed to think, that possibly in Paul we should look for many of the genuine, early traditions and practices of the church; and to attribute to him, excepting of course on the one point of the Gentile controversy, a far less stubborn and isolated independence, and a less strange and peculiar inspiration as an apostle and witness of Christ, than is assigned to him in the common opinion.

To return, however, to his own statements respecting the “grace and apostleship” which Paul declared himself to have received, what further, we ask, did this call and inspiration involve? He certainly claims to have been competently furnished for his apostolic duty, and when he preached the gospel it was, he said, “in demonstration of the spirit and of power.” “God wrought by him,” he affirms, “by word and deed, through signs and wonders, by the power of the Holy Spirit.” To the Galatians, he calls these “the signs of his apostleship.” It is not his wont to dwell upon this view of the attestations of his mission. He prefers to find his justification as an apostle in the changed hearts and lives of his converts. Even his exhortations he makes, as he says, “through the grace given to him” to be faithful and earnest. He apologizes to the Romans for having written to counsel men so full of goodness and knowledge as to be well able to admonish one another, with the remark that “he has written the more boldly in some sort, as putting them in mind because of the grace given to him” to be Christ’s minister to the Gentiles. So naturally does this apostle conceive his relations to men, that even the divinest sanction and inspiration of his work he only employs if possible as a means of more gentle persuasion.

It needs hardly to be remarked that, as an apostle, Paul claimed the right to frame and lay down rules for the churches, to appoint elders among them, and where it was needful to exercise discipline. This was the power which the Lord had given him, he said, for edification, and not (though many of Paul’s successors have not noticed the addition)—not for destruction. All that he does in this way St. Paul refers to the

authority of Christ, to the commandments of Christ, which he professes to declare and enforce, and he desires believers to follow him in such, as in all other things, as he followed Christ. So strongly, however, is he impressed with the reality of this power which has been entrusted to him, that he tells those among the Thessalonians who refused his moral teaching, almost in the words of one of the Gospels, that "he that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath given us of his Holy Spirit."

We have yet to indicate Paul's chief distinction, the claim which the text just quoted suggests—he had been called and endowed for the apostleship of the Gentiles. "Rude in speech," he says, I may be, "but not in knowledge." "We have received the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God, which things we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual,"—an allusion, probably, to his method of proof and illustration from the inspired men of God of the older covenant, illustrating spiritual truth by spiritual interpretation, "not of the letter, but of the spirit," of which we are made competent judges, "able ministers," having, as we know we have, "the mind of Christ."

There was one view of the great work of Christ in his life and death and resurrection, which, notwithstanding their Master's instructions, the twelve were slow to understand. It is said in the Acts that Peter learned it through a vision, yet even so Paul declares that that apostle had learned it but imperfectly. He had to contend with him at Antioch, because, yielding still to Jewish prejudices, he walked not according to the truth of the gospel: we refer to what he designates "the gospel of the uncircumcision," the grand doctrine that "in Christ Jesus neither was circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but the keeping of the commandments of God,"—a passage, by the way, which ought to determine for ever the controversy as to what Paul means when he contrasts the righteousness of faith with the justification by law and works, since he so plainly makes the Christian faith to consist in keeping God's commandments. This is in the first letter to the Corinthians, and it is well explained by the corresponding phrase in the Epistle to the Galatians, of "faith working by love."

Paul could not have learned this doctrine of the expansive power of the gospel, and of the simple spirituality of the kingdom of Christ, in contrast with Jewish rites and forms, and tending necessarily to their abrogation, from any of the actual disciples, for they little comprehended it. Stephen saw it, and may be said to have shewn Paul the way. He read it out, as Paul did afterwards, from the history and teachings of the Old Testament. There can be little doubt that in this consisted the special revelation to St. Paul. He so describes it constantly.



His writings are full of it. "It pleased God to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen."

And we may perhaps see how the revealing Spirit worked in his mind. He was taught to read this doctrine in the ancient prophets, from whom he gathered all his materials for teaching it. This grace came to him through the means of grace, but it surely did not guarantee the complete accuracy of every quotation he made, or even of every interpretation of the ancient writings. It was enough that he understood the doctrine which he was called to preach, "the mystery which had been hidden from ages, but was now to be made manifest, and by the writings of the prophets (so he writes to the Romans), according to the commandment of the everlasting God made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."

It would take long to recite in the barest form all that Paul says of this chief subject of his epistolary discussions. We only add that what he calls "his gospel" was peculiar only as to this one point, that it was preached as a purely spiritual gospel to the Gentiles. In substance it was the gospel of the twelve, the words and lessons of the Son of Man, "warning and teaching every man." Paul adds to one of his finest descriptions of his doctrine as a revelation of the ancient mystery in Christ preached among the Colossians and other Gentiles as "the hope of glory" for all men,—"warning and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." It was thus that Paul accomplished his work, shewing to Jews and Gentiles, as he is reported to have added before Agrippa, "that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance;" and we may read to the end here the commission which Christ then gave him to the Gentiles: "To whom I now send thee, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me."

This was the inspiration, the divine teaching and authorization, claimed by Paul, and with him in like kind by all the apostles. We do not ask, Was it not sufficient? It was all to which they pretended, whether in regard to their own enlightenment or to their means of enlightening others. And we are left to discover by research in their writings what the truth was, the divine truth, which they were left in their own natural way to communicate.

Of course we do not deny that good and honest men, men possessed as they were with heaven-inspired convictions, would naturally write under the favouring eye of the Divine Providence, and aided by the same holy guidance and support for which all pious minds pray. And because we cannot perceive that they were in fact, or that they were likely to have been rendered in theory, infallible, it is not to be supposed that we are about

to charge upon them grave errors, or to attempt to lower their estimation as men who, as Paul says, "had found mercy of the Lord to be faithful" to a responsibility which they evidently felt so deeply. For all that really concerns the saving truth of God, we read them with the same profit, because with the same trust in their competency and in their integrity, with which any persons can approach these writers who believe their inspiration to have rendered their every word infallible.

But it is an argument in favour of our opinion that the common theories of their infallibility have so distracted and led the church astray. The Almighty could surely have penned through them inspired language which would have conveyed to all minds an impression as identical as that given to all, for example, by the Ten Commandments, and by various statements and precepts which might be quoted from portions of the New Testament. The divisions of the church have been created for the most part by the long habit of reading these writings in an unnatural way, and with the belief in an infallibility which not only they do not claim, but which is altogether foreign to their true character.

That the inspiration of the apostles was a spiritual and not an oracular gift might be shewn by the manner in which they always speak of it. It was communicable; the churches might share it. Paul speaks of the Thessalonians as having been "taught of God," and of the Corinthians as "enriched by him in all utterance and knowledge." John says of certain believers that "the anointing that was in them, the unction from the Holy One, had caused them to know all things, so that they needed not that any man should teach them." This is the precise promise of the Paraclete to the twelve; and Paul writes to the Philippians that if they could not as yet all see as one, "God would reveal even this unto them," in whatever the unity of the Spirit among them was still wanting. He speaks of his brother ministers in the same cordial and equal manner, declaring of himself and Apollos that as preachers there was but the difference between them that himself "had planted and Apollos watered." God gave like blessing to both. The gifts of the Spirit were shared among them, and even common members of the churches might receive revelations of the Lord. Paul asserts indeed of himself that he had been singularly favoured in this matter, and had been "taken up into the third heaven, into paradise, and heard unspeakable words which it was not lawful for man to utter." Accordingly he does not attempt to utter them, or give the slightest hint as to what the revelations were. But when he does speak of things to come, of matters proper to an oracular inspiration, we are compelled to see the truth and fitness of our Lord's warning to the disciples, that the times and seasons it was not for them to know, which the Father reserved "in his own power." The whole question of the eschatology, as the New-Testament writers



expound it, is one utterly destructive of any oracular theory. They were not inspired to declare, nor manifestly even to know, the times and the seasons; they *were* inspired to understand and teach the gospel of the illimitable grace of God.

If positive proofs were needed that we have represented justly the conditions of the New-Testament inspiration, we should be content to take the single passage in which Paul discriminates between his own opinion and the commandments of Christ, and simply shew the absurd position which the common theory there creates,—between, first, Paul's judgment; secondly, the commands of Christ; thirdly, the Spirit of God, which he modestly *thinks* is with him; and, in the last place, an inspiration in the very statement of all this, covering all equally with the authority of an infallible lesson of wisdom, giving to the apostle's opinion a character which he carefully disclaims for it.

It is, again, but small appearance of conscious infallibility which a writer betrays who attests his own truth and honesty by repeated oaths,—who glories in, and dwells upon, and laboriously argues his personal sincerity, and declares himself to preach not so much by command as from conviction—"knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;" "we believe and therefore speak."

But the most convincing of all proofs is one which it would require too large a space to develop in all its force. We can only, in the last place, briefly state it. If a man should read the New Testament for the first time without any theological prepossession, the idea of an infallible inspiration in the writing of it could not possibly occur to him. It would be out of place, and there is nothing in the books to suggest such a notion. Not only the writers make no such claim; they seem to have no such idea. There is seen to be no room for the idea if the books are read in the natural way in which obviously they were composed.

If we take for illustration the whole writings which are reasonably attributed to Paul, and classify their topics, we shall find there, first, arguments chiefly based upon his interpretation of the Old Testament; secondly, church orders, advice and exhortation; thirdly, the description of his own past movements and present intentions, and sometimes those of others; fourthly, strong expressions of feeling about various things and persons, and declarations of his own wishes in regard to many particulars. He reasons as other men reason, using the common forms of inference, about the covenants, the call of the Gentiles, the permanent value of faith above law, the evil of sin, and the grand promises of God. He reasons also about the resurrection, and concerning the proper silence of women in the churches. Then he gives orders as to bishops and deacons, and other matters of importance in church order. He gives them as one authorized to rule, but only so. It is always in the manner of a man justi-

fying what he commands by appeal to the understanding of the churches. "I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say." In the same spirit he exhorts and counsels about vice and virtue, about the position of slaves, about civil obedience generally, about compromise with tender consciences, about marriage and going to law. He is careful as to the collections, justifies himself in regard to money entrusted to him, and for his not having used the right of an apostle in that the Lord had ordained "that they who preached the gospel should live of the gospel." He even advises Timothy in regard to the regimen his health needed, and appeals to Philemon concerning Onesimus, precisely as an uninspired man might have done.

Surely there is no need of such inspiration, and hardly any place for it, where Paul describes his own labours and sufferings, his persecutions and his successes,—when he recounts his friends and his enemies, when he salutes the former and strongly denounces the latter,—when he states what he did with Trophimus at Miletus, or what Luke purposes doing, or Apollos refuses to do. And was it not competent for him to give expression to his feelings and wishes without his being burdened by theologians with a *δαίμων* of superintending inspiration? He rejoices over his converts, he grieves when they fall away, he prays on behalf of the churches. He is not hindered by any suspicion that he is perhaps trifling with an inspiring Spirit, from wishing many things relating to his visits to them which never come to pass, nor from giving orders about valued parchments, nor from asking his friend Philemon to prepare a lodging for him, should he become happily once more free to carry on the great work of his commission. This is in brief all that Paul's Epistles contain. Add only his short and beautiful hymns which we call doxologies, his frequent devout references and wise and thoughtful sayings, and the various and striking forms in which he develops the great idea of the gospel which he had been commanded to preach, and the entire mind of this apostle is before us,—an inspired man as to his divine enlightenment, but too eager, too natural a writer to have left space for any suggestion of the thought that his whole manner of utterance was not entirely his own.

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#### NOTES ON THE OLD TESTAMENT.

##### JEREMIAH xlii. 2:

"Let, we beseech thee, our supplication be laid down before thee, and pray thou for us unto Jehovah."

The Authorized Version has, "Let our supplication be accepted;" which is of course the speaker's wish, and which is what an European would have said. But the Asiatic expresses himself with greater humility, and only begs to be allowed to



lay down his supplication at Jeremiah's feet. The same correction is to be made in several other places in the historic portions of the prophet's writings.

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Jeremiah xviii. 14:

"Will the snow of Lebanon leave the fortress of the Almighty?  
Or shall the waters from afar, cold and flowing, be dried up?"

The prophet means to ask, "Will the river Jordan ever fail for want of the winter's snow on the summit of Mount Lebanon?" which, with a bold poetic figure, he calls the fortress of the Almighty. The Authorized Version has, "The rock of the field," instead of "the fortress of the Almighty." Either translation is literal; the reader may consider which is most suitable.

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Isaiah xiv. 9:

"Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thy coming;  
It stirreth up the departed spirits for thee, all the leader-goats of the earth."

The word *Rephaim*, here translated "departed spirits," is in the Authorized Version "the dead." But that it does mean the souls of persons living in hell seems probable from the other texts where the word occurs, and where I would make the same correction. The subject is so important, as shewing the opinion of the Jews at the time of the captivity, when this part of Isaiah, a denunciation against Babylon, was written, that I add the other texts to justify my proposed rendering.

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Isaiah xxvi. 14:

"They are dead, they shall not live; they are departed spirits, they shall not rise."

Isaiah xxvi. 19:

"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the departed spirits."

Proverbs ix. 18:

"But he knoweth not that the departed spirits are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell."

These passages seem to shew that the *Rephaim*, or dead men, spoken of, are not bodies lying in the grave, but spirits living in hell. In the last quotation they are wicked spirits, and might be compared to Milton's devils, except that they had once been alive upon earth. This same word is elsewhere translated giants, and is given as a name to one of the races of barbarians whom the Israelites had to encounter in their settlement in the Promised Land; and we may easily understand in the mind of any nation that there might be a connecting thought between giants on earth and wicked spirits in hell. The Valley of the Giants, in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, may have been so called for

the same reason that we give the name of the Devil's Dyke, the Devil's Bridge, the Devil's Punch-bowl, to a number of wild spots in our own country. In one passage these spirits are spoken of as never having been the inhabitants of a human body. This is in Job xxvi. 5, where we must translate, not "departed spirits," but "evil spirits," thus: "Evil spirits are born beneath the waters, and are the inhabitants thereof."

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Psalm cxliv. 3:

"O Jehovah, what is man [or Adam], that thou takest knowledge of him!

Or the son of man [or of Enos], that thou makest account of him!

Man [or Adam] is like to vanity [or to Abel];

His days are as a shadow that passeth away."

In this way the psalmist makes use of the names of three of the patriarchs for a play upon words, and thereby shews to us his acquaintance with the early chapters of Genesis. This remark is not unimportant to us when we are considering the history of the books of the Pentateuch.

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Psalm cxxxiii.:

*A Song with Steps [or catch words].*

"Behold how SWEET and how pleasant it is

For brethren to dwell together in unity!

It is like the SWEET ointment upon the head,

That FELL DOWN upon the beard, even Aaron's beard;

FALLING DOWN to the hem of his garments;

As the dew of Hermon or that FALLING DOWN upon the mountains of Zion:

For there Jehovah commanded the blessing, even life evermore."

In this way the writer introduces into each sentence, as a leading word, a word already employed in the former sentence. He makes use of an artificial memory; and this recurrence of the same words seems to have given to the psalm its title of a Song of Steps. The peculiarity is lost in the Authorized Version by the care with which sameness of expressions is avoided.

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Psalm xvi. 9:

"Therefore my heart is glad and my liver rejoiceth."

We now make the liver the seat only of sourness and disappointment, and we place the kindly and happy feelings in the heart. But it is not so in the East. The Arab of the present day will describe a man as "the friend of my liver," when we should say, "the friend of my heart." The Authorized Version here has, "thy glory rejoices."

S. S.



SOME FRAGMENTARY NOTICES OF THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY  
OF LEWES, AND ESPECIALLY OF THE NONCONFORMITY  
THEREIN.

No visitor of the South Downs of England, gifted with an intelligent curiosity, would willingly omit seeing this picturesque and ancient town situated at their eastern extremity. The place will awaken many historical associations of varied interest. We may conclude from the coins and other antiquities found here that the Romans knew and used the place. Protected by a massive castle, the Anglo-Saxons regarded it as a place of more than common strength, for here they coined money at more than one mint. Soon after the descent on our shores of the Norman race, the whole rape of Lewes was bestowed by William upon one of his barons, who also stood to him in the nearer relation of son-in-law. This Norman baron rebuilt the Anglo-Saxon castle, and although no remains of the structure that survive can be assigned to the Norman era, the Gate-house, of which a venerable ruin exists, is supposed to date back as far as the time of Edward III.

But it is the religious history of the place of which we propose to give a few fragmentary notices. The traveller, who glides so easily in his railway-carriage amidst and under the tall hills which surround Lewes, passes over the site of an ancient Cluniac priory, the destroyers of which, in the reign of Henry VIII., have left in their correspondence some account of its extraordinary size and magnificence.

A person who signs himself Johan Portinari, writing, March 24, 1537-8, to Cromwell, to whom the site of the priory was given by the King, speaks admiringly of the "lengthe and greeatenes of thys church." He describes a vault on the right side of the high altar supported by four huge pillars, having around it five chapels, the walls of which extended 210 feet. The length of the priory was 150 feet, its height 63 feet. The walls were generally 5 feet thick, but that which bore the steeple, 10 feet. The roof (which rose from the ground 90 feet) was sustained by two-and-thirty pillars, eight of which were 14 feet thick. The work of ruin was carried on by seventeen mechanics, used to the work, brought from London, and Cromwell's correspondent called out for a larger number of men and other implements than they had. (See Letters relating to the Suppression of Monasteries.)

There for centuries before and after this work of devastation, lay the remains of William de Warrenne and Gundrada his wife, the founders of the priory. When, fifteen years ago, the contractors were cutting their way through the débris of the ruins of the chapter-house, they disinterred the two leaden coffins of the founders,\* and thus identified the locality of the chapter-house.

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\* From the small size of the coffins it is conjectured that the bones had been

It is no breach of charity to suppose that in the munificent foundation of the priory, not unworthy of a royal race, atonement was made for violence and crime which had desolated many an Anglo-Saxon homestead, and that thus the saving prayers and blessing of a rapacious priesthood were purchased.

That benedictine priory of Lewes was doubtless witness to both good and evil. It was established to aid in the purifying of the Saxon monastic discipline. In the panegyrical lines on the tomb of Gundrada, we read, "*Intulit ecclesiis Anglorum balsama morum.*" If the priors of Lewes fed the hungry and gave a home to some that had no other home, and sometimes offered the sanctity of an asylum to those that fled from baronial violence and cruelty, we may believe that in the eye of omniscient Mercy their virtue was accepted and their superstition pardoned. But there were in all those monastic establishments follies, and things still worse, which made them a burthen to the land and a snare to the religious conscience of the people. "The worst crimes," observes the editor of the Letters relating to the Suppression of Monasteries, "laid to the charge of the monks are but too fully verified by the long chain of historical evidence, reaching without interruption from the 12th century to the 16th. Those who have studied in the interior history of this long period the demoralizing effect of the Popish system of confession and absolution, will find no difficulty in conceiving the facility with which the inmates of the monasteries at the time of their dissolution confessed to vices from the very name of which our imagination recoils."

It sometimes happened that in those towns and districts in which the Papal system had by their means been most thoroughly developed, a counter spirit of earnest Protestantism and Puritanism early arose. This is easily accounted for. They who had been brought most into personal contact with indolent monks and rapacious priors, and whose household talk often dwelt on the follies, vices and oppressions of men that should have been self-denying, holy and charitable, would feel a strong anti-monastic and anti-papal spirit. When the Reformation arose in England, these men and their children would naturally incline to the new faith. It is certain that the Protestant and Puritan element was very strongly developed in Lewes and the surrounding district.

In the Book of Martyrs, Lewes occupies a place of honour. Abhorrent as to modern taste are the details of extreme bodily suffering, it is still right that the story of the martyrs should be

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transferred to them some ages after interment, perhaps on the occasion of some alteration in the priory. The subject is elegantly treated in a discourse preached at the time of this interesting discovery, and afterwards printed, by Rev. Samuel Wood, then minister of the Presbyterian chapel of Lewes. It was entitled, "*The Convent and the Railway; or our own Days and those of our Fathers.*"

told. It is a necessary link in the historic chain, and unless it be preserved there will be no coherence in the different portions of the history. This, in brief, is the story of the martyrs at Lewes.

In the latter end of 1554, Derrick Carver, of Brighthelmston, by birth a Dutchman, John Launder, of Godstone, and others, were apprehended by Edward Gage, of Firle, gentleman, at the house of Carver, where they had assembled for worship. The council sent them to Newgate. There they lay eight months, awaiting the leisure of the busy and merciless Bonner. June 8, 1555, they were examined by him, and commanded to appear again before him in the consistory of St. Paul's. In this second examination the previous confessions of the prisoners, with the articles and their answers, were publicly read to them, and first of all Derrick was asked if he continued to hold the obnoxious opinions. He replied that he did, and added to his Popish Judge, "Your doctrine is poison and sorcery. If Christ were here, you would put him to a worse death than he was put to before. Further, I say that auricular confession is contrary to God's word." Launder also continued inflexible. The firmness of the prisoners convinced the Bishop that all further attempts to win them over to the orthodoxy of the day would be fruitless; he therefore proceeded to pronounce upon them his usual blessing (!), and despatched them to their places of execution. Steyning was the death-place of Launder; for Carver the faggots were piled in front of the Star Inn\* at Lewes.

On Derrick Carver's entrance into the town, he was received by the inhabitants with tender commiseration, heightened by the evidences he gave of a noble intrepidity. At the place of execution the sheriff bore witness to his worth by declaring that he found him a faithful man in all his answers. After kneeling in prayer, he ascended the fatal pyre, and finding that his Bible had been placed there for destruction with himself, he threw it amongst the people, doubtless hoping that it would be prized as a sacred relic and be read by many in after days. Before the fire was applied to the pile he addressed the assembled multitude, and presently died bravely.

In the following year other martyrs met their death at Lewes. They were of humble rank. Thomas Harland was a carpenter, and John Oswald a husbandman, and both were of Woodmancote, in the rape of Bramber. Thomas Ovington and Thomas Read, after long imprisonment in the Queen's Bench, were burnt at

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\* This venerable hostelry still keeps its place in the town, and is thus described in Murray's *Hand-Book for Kent and Sussex*: "The *Star Inn*, good and old-fashioned, with a grand old staircase of carved oak, brought here from Slaugham Place, the ancient seat of the Coverts. The cellar is antique and vaulted, and is said to have served as a prison for many of the Marian martyrs, some of whom were burnt in the street fronting the house."



Lewes. Of Harland, some interesting particulars are given. His crime was absence from church during the whole of Queen Mary's reign. In self-justification, he said, "that since the re-establishment of the mass he had felt no inclination to attend the services of the Church, because they were conducted in the Latin tongue, of which he had no knowledge." John Oswald, when threatened with a heretic's death, said,—“Fire and faggots cannot appal me; as the good preachers in King Edward's days have suffered and gone before me, so am I ready to suffer and go after them, and shall be glad so to do.” Of Thomas Read a curious anecdote survives. During the proceedings against him his courage faltered, and he had resolved to conform to save his life. But during the night-time a vision appeared to him in his sleep; a train of tall and comely young men in white passed before him; he wished and tried to join them, but found himself restrained and unable to do what he desired. Looking upon himself, he discovered that his frame was covered with unseemly spots. Revolving this dream in his mind in his waking hours, he interpreted the spots to be typical of his unfaithful and polluted heart. Shocked at the degradation which his purpose of conformity had nearly brought him to, he resolved to be true to conscience and brave the worst consequences, and he went to his death in peace.

The next victims of Popish cruelty at Lewes, who suffered a fortnight after, were Thomas Wood, a minister, and Thomas Mills, of Hellingly.

But the crowning act of cruelty was perpetrated June 22nd, 1557, when the flames consumed at the same time and on the same spot ten Protestants, of whom four were women. The chief of this little army of faithful Christians was Richard Woodman, an ironmonger, of Hastings, who is described as a person of good reputation and as one who did much good in those parts, setting poor men to work, godly in his habits, and an assiduous reader of his Bible. In his case the usual processes of the wicked laws which then existed were observed, and are minutely described in Foxe's Martyrology. His offence was, in the first instance, his remonstrating with the parish priest of Warbleton, one Fairbank, for religious inconsistency in turning and trimming with the times. Woodman told him to fear no man, but preach the truth. He was once dismissed by Bonner; but going afterwards from parish to parish, and talking with the people on religious matters, and not avoiding discussion with the parish priests, he became the subject of angry complaints to the Queen herself. He was again arrested, but for a time escaped, and found a hiding-place in a wood near his own dwelling, where he had his Bible and pen and ink. His good wife daily brought him his food. A painful part of his story is that he was at length arrested by the aid of his own father and brother, who had some property of his in

their hands. He was subjected before his condemnation to as many as thirty-two judicial inquisitions.

With respect to the other nine who shared his horrible death, it is said that they were arrested only a few days before their execution. If this be correct, the forms of law must have been shamelessly violated. The Bishop of Chichester, John Christopherson, assisted in the condemnation of Richard Woodman. In this *decatomb* there was this dreadful peculiarity, that a mother and her son, Margery and James Morris, were fellow-sufferers. "Grievous," remarked Thomas Fuller, "was the persecution in this county (Sussex) under John Christopherson, the Bishop thereof. Such his havoc in burning poor Protestants in one year, that had he sat long in that see, and continued after that rate, there needed no iron mills to rarifie the woods of this county. The Papists admire him as a great divine, which I will not oppose, but only say, as the man said of his surly mistress,—

‘She hath too much divinity for me:

Oh! that she had some more humanity!’”

The crimes which stained the Marian rule in England shut out for ever the possibility of re-establishing Popery in England. In the forcible words of Mr. Froude, in the first chapter of his *History of Elizabeth*, just published: "The fanaticism of the Catholic clergy had discredited their doctrine and forfeited for them the confidence of moderate and reasonable men. They had clutched so passionately at the privileges to which they pretended that their theories entitled them, they had betrayed so incautiously their unslaked thirst for power, for wealth, for blood, that the world was taking them at their word, and judging the tree by its fruits. . . . A blight as if from heaven had rested on them and their deeds. . . . The figures of the murdered Cranmer and his fellow-sufferers stood out against the dark background of those wretched times as the victims of an accursed tyranny; and with the halo of martyrdom shining round them, they became silent preachers of righteousness, more effective in death than in life."\* (Vol. I. p. 10.)

We are happily able to glean some information respecting the

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\* Mr. Froude adds these weighty words respecting the vantage-ground occupied by the friends of religious reformation, which gave them in the end a certain victory. "However men might argue and wrangle, however they might persuade themselves that they believed what they did not believe, *Catholicism* had ceased to be the expression of the true conviction of sensible men on the relation between themselves and heaven. Credible to the student in the cloister, credible to those whose thoughts were but echoes of tradition, it was not credible any more to men of active and original vigour of understanding. Credible to the uneducated, the eccentric, the imaginative, the superstitious; credible to those who reasoned by sentiment and made syllogisms of their passions,—it was incredible, then and evermore, to the sane and healthy intelligence, which in the long run commands the mind of the world." Is not this description partly true now of the Articles and Creeds of the Anglican Church? They retain their place, though their logical defences are no more, by the sluggish conservatism which characterizes an Established Church.

family of Richard Woodman, and it serves to shew that the same lofty principle which hardened men to bear the fire in the reign of Mary, made them outspoken Nonconformists in that of the two Charleses. Richard Woodman's son became a clergyman, and also educated his son Thomas to the ministry of the Church. The latter was at the time of the passing of the Act of Uniformity in the enjoyment of the living of Slinfold, in the county of Sussex, worth in those days £300 a-year. His wife belonged to a family of High-church principles. The Bishop of Chichester was urgent with him to conform, and in his family of nine children he had strong motives for not abandoning a gainful cure. His mother died just before the time came for his decision, and so little appreciated the high conscientiousness of her son, that, resenting the conformity which she expected he would profess, she disinherited him of a not small fortune. When he took his place among the ejected clergy, his father-in-law refused to see or help him. So this good man, the martyr's grandson, was a sufferer from the intolerance of Conformity as well as Nonconformity. Driven by the Five-Mile Act from Slinfold, he found an asylum and a loving flock at Horsham, where he continued through the persecution to profess and preach the gospel, and was happily little disturbed. He died March, 1683, in his 63rd year; and a tombstone in Horsham churchyard, on which Mr. Robert Fish, another ejected minister, put an inscription, used to mark the spot.

In the struggle between Puritan and High-church principles which took place subsequently to the Reformation, many of the Sussex clergy sided with the Puritans. In the reign of Elizabeth (1583), certain ministers in the county, taking exceptions to some of the rubrics in the Book of Common Prayer, were suspended. One of these hesitating conformists was Thomas Underdown, minister of St. Mary's in Lewes. He was peremptorily summoned, together with the other clergy of the archdeaconry, to appear in the church of St. Michael on Nov. 20, 1583, there to perform all the duties and injunctions as Dr. Longworth, visitor to Archbishop Whitgift, should impose upon them, in accordance with the instructions of the Archbishop. The consequence was the suspension of Underdown and many others of the Sussex clergy for non-subscription. They appealed to Whitgift, who demanded of them immediate and unconditional subscription, telling them he could find conformable men as sufficient as themselves to fill their livings. In the record of the proceedings the following words passed:

*"The Archbishop.* You of Sussex have been accounted very disorderly and contentious, and her Majesty hath been informed of you, and I mean to proceed strictly with you. *Mr. Underdown.* My Lord, the ministers of Sussex have been as well ordered as any in the kingdom, until one Shales came among them and



broached certain points of Popery and heresy, which hath been the cause of all those troubles. *The Archbishop*. It would have been a wonder if you were not quiet, seeing you have all done as you pleased, without the least control; the devil will be quiet so long."

The clergymen pleaded that they could only subscribe under protestation. Although Whitgift declared he would admit no protestation, matters were eventually accommodated. The clergymen consulted together by themselves in the Archbishop's garden, and then returning, consented to subscribe on these somewhat remarkable conditions: "that their subscription should not be required to anything against the word of God or contrary to the analogy of faith, and that it should not be extended to anything not already contained in the Book of Common Prayer. Also, to avoid all cavilling, Mr. Underdown protested that the Book of Consecration did not belong to them and that they could not subscribe to it." This remark referred to the professing to give the Holy Ghost to the priest at ordination. "Do not you think," asked the Bishop of Rochester, "that when we use these words we do communicate something?" Mr. Underdown honestly answered, "I think not, my Lord; for persons return from you no better furnished than when they came unto you, if we may form an opinion from their practice." Underdown and his companions subscribed on the relaxed and conditional terms stated above. He pleaded in behalf of more than twenty other ministers in Sussex suspended as they had been, and it was added that some who had under pressure subscribed were "greatly troubled in mind for what they had done."

Amongst the Sussex Puritans in the following century was John Frewen, a writer as well as a zealous preacher. The name of his son, "Accepted," discloses the Puritan bias of the family. The son, abandoning his father's principles, found acceptance at court, and ultimately became Archbishop of York.

The appointment by Charles I. of Dr. Richard Montague to the see of Chichester was a sore trial of the patience of the Puritan clergy in that diocese. They had made large use of the instrumentality of lecturers for disseminating their views and principles amongst the people. To the suppression of these Puritan lecturers the Bishops directed their efforts. In the articles of inquiry which Montague afterwards circulated in the diocese of Norwich on his first visitation, we find a particular description of the plans adopted at these innovating lectures: "Forasmuch as of late years the course and humouring of lecturing, and the frequenting and hearing such exercises is of great resort in the Church of England, . . . the churchwardens and sidemen are given to understand that there be among us three sorts of lecturers. 1. The first, most hugged, followed, admired and maintained, is a superinducted lecturer in another man's cure and pastorall charge, who hath some resemblance to the ancient

catharist in the primitive church, but is up and down the same with the doctour in the new discipline" (referring to that of Geneva), "which (I take it) is the motive of his so great approbation and good entertainment above the incumbent of the cure, though never so learned and painful. 2. The second sort of lecturers be those of combination, when many neighbouring ministers do voluntarily agree and consent, with the ordinary's approbation, not otherwise, to preach a sermon, every man in his course, at some adjoining market-town upon the market-day, for instructing such as repair together to sell and buy, in their duty to God and commerce with man. 3. A third sort be running lecturers, who appoint upon such a day to meet at such a church, most an end in some country town or village; and then after sermon, and dinner at some house of their disciples, repeat, censure and explain the sermon, discourse of points proposed at their last meeting by the head of that *classis* or assembly, even to the promoting of their own fancies, and derogation from the doctrine and discipline of the Church; after all, they do again *condicere* and appoint to meet next at such a church, in like sort, to like purpose. Such I found in *Sussex* at my coming thither."

The habit of Nonconformity, at least in a portion of the inhabitants of Lewes, seems to have developed itself even before the Commonwealth time. An Independent church was formed here as early as June 8, 1647, and on Nov. 5th following it chose as its pastor Mr. Gualter Postlethwayt. This name is one of many in Calamy's record of the ejected clergy which is associated with the religious history of Lewes. Calamy describes him as "a sound preacher, a holy liver, and a strict governor of the flock that was his charge." He gave in to the "fifth-monarchy notion," a species of fanaticism which in that age entangled the understanding of some very earnest and good men. But it is said that his private opinions did not affect his ordinary preaching, which was followed by many happy results. Approving reference is made by the historian to the more than common excellence of some members of his flock, "the fruits of whose strict and pious family government appeared in many of those who descended from them." The Act of Uniformity found Mr. Postlethwayt in possession of the living of St. Michael. There must have previously been some inconvenience in the admixture within the walls of the parish church of "a gathered church" and the mere parishioners. To the former only would the minister sustain the intimate relations of the Christian pastor. The straitness of doctrine and discipline of some of the early Independent churches in England probably served to heighten the antipathy to Nonconformity expressed in many quarters after the Restoration. Mr. Postlethwayt, during the nine years which he lived after his ejection, persevered in his profession of Nonconformity and in preaching as often as he had the opportunity. At Lewes, as

at other places, the oppressed Nonconformists doubtless often merged the differences of Independency and Presbyterianism in a common desire for religious liberty and the privileges of a gospel ministry. Traces are found of the occasional blending of the two parties previously to the manifestation among Presbyterians of doctrines (the fruit of their greater freedom in church discipline) which the other party regarded as intolerable heresy. Mr. Postlethwayt did not live to see the relaxation of Nonconformist persecution, but, dying in 1671, was succeeded in the pastoral relation in the following year by Mr. Joseph Whiston, the ejected minister of Maidstone. In one of his valuable MSS. now deposited in the British Museum, and entitled, "*Brittania Puritanica*," the late Rev. Joseph Hunter thus writes concerning the earlier Nonconformity of Lewes: "It is not easy to say whether we are to understand Calamy to mean that he (Mr. Postlethwayt) founded a Nonconforming congregation here, when he says that Mr. Postlethwayt died in 1671 and was succeeded by Mr. Joseph Whiston. But turning to the account of Mr. Whiston, who was ejected at Maidstone (p. 375), we find that he was called to a pastoral charge in Lewes, where he continued to the time of his death, which was near twenty years. He seems to have been a liberal Independent, ruling union between the two parties, which union in Sussex died with him. Calamy has a very interesting account of him. He died in January, 1690, aged 62, and was buried in the churchyard of St. Michael, where lie many of the early Nonconforming ministers, whose names Calamy enumerates."

Mr. Whiston was succeeded by Mr. George Porter, whom the Act of Uniformity had ejected from Magdalen College, Oxford. Calamy, who speaks of him as a man of good learning, calls him in the matter of church government "a sort of Interpendent," holding on some points with the Presbyterians, on others with the Independents. He, like some other religious men of that age, was sorely beset by melancholy, to that degree that "for several years he had little comfortable enjoyment of his friends, himself or his God." But apart from these fits of depression, he was a sensible and wise man. It was he who, rebuking the use in the pulpit of highflown expressions, said, "Learning consists not in hard words, but in depth of matter." From Lewes he removed to Eastbourne, and afterwards to Clare, in Suffolk, where he died, in his 74th year, in July, 1697. Another of the ejected clergy who ministered for a short time to this people was Mr. Comfort Star, ejected from Carlisle; but if the dates are correctly given, he came to Lewes only two years before his death, which took place in 1711, in the 87th year of his age. The name of the next minister was Rev. John Ollive. But there was a second ejection in Lewes on the enforcement of the Act of Uniformity, the subject of which was Mr. Edward Newton. He was one that did honour to Presbyterian Nonconformity.



Born at Maidstone about the year 1627, he was educated at Baliol College, Oxford. He took his Master's degree and became Fellow of his College. Anthony Wood, however, does not mention his name. When about twenty-five years of age, he obtained Presbyterian ordination in St. Thomas's church, Salisbury. His first ministerial settlement was at Kingston by the sea: the parish had but three houses in it, but Mr. Newton succeeded in drawing many hearers from the neighbouring parishes. He married the daughter of Mr. Benjamin Pickering, minister of St. Anne's and Southover, in Lewes, who was also one of the Assembly of Westminster Divines. He succeeded his father-in-law in the two livings at Lewes, preaching every Sunday in each of his two churches, attended by persons of different parties, and gaining general acceptance. He felt deeply the separation from the Church, which was the price of his honest Nonconformity, and took a sorrowful leave of his parishioners from the words, 2 Tim. ii. 7. But though ejected, he would not be silenced, but continued to preach the gospel as he had opportunity. To the flock that gathered around him he did his endeavour (Calamy says) to recommend "practical religion." He felt the hardship of persecuting times, but was happily spared imprisonment and bonds, though often threatened, his house searched and himself pursued. The Five-Mile Act compelled him to make himself a stranger to his own house and family. He could for a time visit them only by stealth and in disguise.

Some incidents at Lewes related of those days may serve to bring before us what it was to live under a persecuting State Church. "In Sept., 1663, John Snashall, surgeon, of Lewes, in the exercise of his profession, had entered the house of a patient. His movements were watched by soldiers. They raised a shout, and on his leaving the house he was seized and accused of having been at a conventicle. He was fined and imprisoned in the house of correction for three months. Richard Snashall (probably a member of the same family) was fined £60 for not having attended the parish church for three months." These facts are stated in Mr. Horsfield's *History of Lewes*.

In the *Calendar of State Papers*, recently published, we find, under the date October 10, 1663,—“One John Hetherington writing to Secretary Williamson from Lewes, and describing the town as perverse to the King's government, and giving the names of persons convicted, but he says they ‘might have been five times as many.’ The spy, as usual with his class, suspects a plot; but adds, ‘Ministers so fear a turn that they act slowly. Conventicles are as much frequented as in Oliver's time.’”

In the following December, the same man writes to the Secretary in these terms: “The sectaries are as great as ever. One of their saints dying, the minister of the parish heard they were to bury him at night; so he watched, and when the corpse arrived

appeared to do his office, on which they took back the body. They brought it again in two hours, and again he appeared, when they were so insolent that he bound several of them over to good behaviour. Twenty shops were open in contempt on Christmas-day, though the minister sent to them. Fair means do no good on these stubborn rascals."

After eight years of silencing and other modes of persecution, the Nonconformists of Lewes still numbered about 500. Of these, about 40 persons were brought on one occasion under the fangs of the law. On the 29th of May, 1670, they had assembled together for worship at a house about a mile out of the town; at three o'clock in the afternoon, the place proving too small, they adjourned to a retired lane about a quarter of a mile distant, and there continued their service. Two informers unfortunately were present. One of them, with hypocritical effrontery, told his wife when he returned home that he had heard one of the most excellent sermons he ever listened to. On the following day, informations were laid before Sir Thomas Nutt, and 40 persons were on that information condemned. The officiating minister was cast in the sum of £20, and five of the more wealthy hearers were made answerable for its payment. The rest were fined in various sums according to their reputed ability to pay. Some being too poor to pay anything, their fines were laid on others more sufficient; thus Thomas Ridge, of the Cliffe,\* draper, had to pay not only the fine for himself and wife, but for four poorer hearers also. When the constable executed the warrant of seizure of goods, they took from Thomas Ridge goods worth fifty shillings. The remark of the good man was, "He parted as willingly with these things as with any goods he ever sold." The names of the sufferers (except the officiating minister) and many curious particulars are given in a contemporary tract, entitled, "A Narrative of the late Proceedings of some Justices and others pretending to put in execution the late Act against Conventicles, against several peaceable People in and about the Town of Lewes, in Sussex, only for their being quietly met to worship God; together with a brief Account of the like Proceedings against some at Brighthelmston, and others at Chilmington in the same County, 1670."†

\* The Cliffe is adjoining to Lewes, and the name of Ridge is still one known in the annals of Dissent at Lewes. There are two ejected ministers mentioned by Calamy both named John Ridge—one of them, ejected from Foundington, in Sussex, is described as a laborious and learned man, a linguist and a philosopher, in divinity a critic and a textuary, but he wanted popular power. He left a Latin MS. History of the Nonconformists of England, including their acts and sufferings from the beginning of the Reformation to their condition about 1670. To this work, John Corbet, of Chichester, added a supplement. The MS. was in the hands of Calamy, but is now, together with numerous other treatises of the same kind that would be invaluable to us, lost.

† This very rare tract is reprinted in the Appendix of Horsfield's History of Lewes.

Between the early Nonconformists of Lewes and Brighton\* there was occasional and friendly intercourse.

Such were the incidents amidst which Mr. Newton and his friends struggled to keep the faith with untarnished conscience. He refused to quit the scene of his useful and accepted labours, though invited to remove to Maidstone, his birth-place. When, in 1672, Charles put out his Declaration of Indulgence, Mr. Newton took out a licence in a private house, and continued to preach therein openly until the Indulgence was withdrawn. When King James II., for his own purposes, granted religious liberty to the Nonconformists, he fitted up a spacious house in the main street of Lewes, a little to the south-east of the old west gate of the borough. It was an ancient and substantial building, originally built as the mansion of the Goring family, but afterwards converted into the Bull Inn. When Mr. Horsfield wrote his History of Lewes, he gave this description of the chapel in Westgate: "The building has evident marks of great antiquity, the walls are of an extraordinary thickness and the windows are large, in massive stone frames. The interior is spacious, and though badly laid out and without galleries, will seat upwards of 400 persons. The double roof is supported by a series of pillars which run down the centre of the building, and give a degree of dignity to the time-hallowed spot. Seen from the south of the town, this structure has a noble appearance, being considerably elevated above the buildings in its front; and its strong and antique walls well contrasting with the small modern buildings in its vicinity. The northern side is hid by mean and obscure buildings."

Here Mr. Newton continued to conduct the service till 1696. Then Mr. Thomas Barnard was admitted to be joint pastor with him. Their joint ministry was so far successful that the meeting-house was found to be insufficient for the increasing flock. When plans for its enlargement were under discussion, misunderstanding-

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\* The early Nonconformists of Brighton sometimes met for worship at a farmhouse called Wick, about a mile from the town; sometimes their meetings took place at a malt-house at the upper end of North Street. The owner, Mr. Beard, on one occasion, for permitting a conventicle there, was sentenced to lose all the malt found on the premises. As late as the year 1774, there was to be seen in the house of Mr. Downer, near Sherfold's assembly-room, a recess constructed as a hiding-place of the minister when surprised. The original Nonconformist interest at Brighton was swallowed up by the prevalent Methodism. A remarkable statement is found in Josiah Thompson's MS. collections, preserved in Dr. Williams's Library, an anecdote respecting Theophilus Lindsey in connection with Brighton which has escaped the notice of his biographer: "The foundation of Methodism in this town was laid by Mr. Lindsey, since noted by giving up his living in the Church, opening a place of worship at Essex House in the Strand. He was part of two summers at Brighthelmston with Lady Huntingdon as her chaplain, and used to collect private meetings, and was considered by the people in the light of a Methodist preacher. Some time after which, her Ladyship erected a chapel in North Street, which in the summer of 1774 was greatly enlarged, so as to contain 600 or 700 people, which is usually crowded on a Lord's-day evening."



ing and disputes arose between the two ministers. Mr. Barnard had become the proprietor of the premises, and Mr. Newton had in his old age the sore trial of going forth anew, and leaving behind him the place which, after passing through many storms, he had secured as a tabernacle. He and his friends found another place in Crown Lane. Here he passed the residue of his official course, which closed in 1709. He survived till the beginning of 1712, when he sank into the grave with the infirmities of eighty-four or eighty-five years' growth. His ministry at Lewes lasted about half a century. Calamy says that as a preacher he was plain, serious and practical. In his personal demeanour he was meek and inoffensive, and had won golden opinions from men in and out of the Church. Although accidentally compelled to quit the Westgate meeting-house, he may with propriety be regarded as the very worthy founder of Presbyterian Nonconformity in Lewes. Of the seventy or eighty clergymen whom the county of Sussex contributed to the noble roll of confessors in 1662, we cannot name a better man than Edward Newton.

Others of the ejected clergy who were connected with Lewes remain to be named. Mr. Henry Godman, irregularly ejected in 1660 from Radmil, in Sussex, was a native of the town. He is mentioned by Calamy as preaching to a numerous assembly of Nonconformists at Lewes, May 29, 1670. Notwithstanding every caution, some informers had got admittance. The preacher's text was Eph. v. 16, *Redeeming the time*. They fastened on the context, *because the days are evil*, as designed to suggest seditious thoughts. Though the preacher escaped, many of his hearers were heavily fined for their share in this meeting. The magistrate who inflicted the fines was Sir Thomas Nutt. But after and better experience of the temper and aims of his Nonconformist neighbours made him more tolerant and forbearing. It is said that when, some time after, Bishop Gunning, who was a stern enforcer of the laws against the Dissenters, came to Lewes, and sat with the magistrates at quarter sessions, he appealed to Sir Thomas to help him, as of old, in putting down the conventicles in the diocese. But the squire declined, telling the Bishop that he "found that to have good neighbours he must be one himself." The Nonconformists had some powerful friends and protectors in the county, e.g., Sir Harry Goring, Sir John Fagge, of Wiston, Mr. Le Gay, of West Stoke, Mr. Morley, of Glynde, and Colonel Herbert Morley.

Rev. Joseph Hunter thinks that Mr. Godman, the ejected minister, was a member of the family of the same name at Chichester, and also of that of Mr. Richard Godman Temple.

Mr. John Earl (a relation of Dr. Earl, Bishop of Salisbury), when ejected from Terring, in Sussex, found an asylum and an early grave, in 1669, at Lewes, and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Newton. The Five-Mile Act, by driving him

from home and friends, was a great trouble to his spirit. He naturally resented being hunted from house to house as though he were a criminal. Yet afterwards he said that he knew some who, had it not been for that Act, would have lacked bread for themselves and their children. Being scattered abroad they fed many spiritually, who in return gladly gave them and theirs the bread that perisheth; thus, according to Samson's riddle, the eater yielded meat and sweetness.

Mr. John Stonestreet, ejected from Linfield, also found an asylum during his last years in Lewes, and a last resting-place in St. Anne's churchyard. The list might, were it desirable, be considerably extended.

"Now," remarks Mr. Hunter, "quitting Calamy, who is admirably instructive for the foundation of these congregations, and looking at the state of Dissent in Lewes in 1715, we find there a Presbyterian and an Independent congregation. The Presbyterian consisted of 170 people, of whom Thomas Force was the minister. The Independent of 425 people, of whom John Ollive, Thomas Barnard and Joseph Beech, were ministers, but whether together or in succession is not quite apparent."

A somewhat more minute account is given in Mr. Josiah Thompson's MS. work,\* in which a correction is offered of a statement which we have given on the authority of Calamy:

"Mr. Ollive and his church and people united with Mr. Thos. Barnard and his church and people, and became one church and congregation. Mr. Barnard was before joined with Rev. Edward Newton, minister of the Presbyterian meeting-house in this town, who continued on Mr. Barnard's separation from him to preach at his old place to a considerable congregation. Mr. Barnard's separation from Mr. Newton was in the year 1700, though Dr. Calamy said 1707; but the Dr. must have been misinformed, for the first sermon that was preached in the present meeting-house after it was fitted up by Mr. Barnard and the people was on the 5th of November, 1700, and that date is near the meeting-house door. To Mr. Newton in that congregation, succeeded the Rev. Thomas Force; but I cannot learn the particular year, though there is reason to think it was in 1708.† In March, 1742, Rev. James Watkins succeeded Mr. Force, and preached in that meeting till towards the end of 1758. Mr. Ollive continued preaching in the other meeting after Mr. Barnard, through age and infirmities, was laid aside, and had for an assistant, about the

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\* This work has this title: "A Collection of Papers containing an Account of some Hundred Protestant Dissenting Congregations, the Succession of their Pastors, and remarkable Providences and Transactions. Taken from their Church Books, &c. Begun to be collected in the year 1772. Vols. I.—IV."

† According to Mr. Walter Wilson's MS. collection, Mr. John Ollive succeeded to the pastoral office July 20, 1709, and Nov. 6, 1711, he and his church united with the congregation of Mr. Barnard.

year 1716, the Rev. Mr. Joseph Beach. August, 1741, Rev. Ebenezer Johnston succeeded Mr. Ollive, and was ordained July 21, 1742; and Mr. Watkins, laying aside preaching, he and his people united, Jan. 7, 1759, with the church under Mr. Johnston's care."

Of Mr. Ebenezer Johnston, who had the good fortune to unite the two congregations, Mr. Horsfield has given a very interesting account in that part of his *History of Lewes* which relates to the Westgate meeting-house, and which was reprinted in the *Monthly Repository*, XIX. 281. The succession of ministers there given terminates with the name of Thomas W. Horsfield. During his ministry there was another junction with the Westgate congregation, viz. that of the General Baptist society in the neighbouring district of Southover. Their chapel was erected by subscription in 1741. The last minister there of whom we have any record was Rev. James Taplin, who has since been the useful minister of several Unitarian societies at Jersey, Tavistock and Crediton.

Mr. Horsfield published, in addition to his topographical volume on Lewes already referred to, a *History of Sussex*, which he was permitted to dedicate to the King (William the Fourth). From Lewes Mr. Horsfield removed to Taunton, and thence to Chowbent, where he died. The next minister was Rev. C. P. Valentine, who removed thither from Diss. He was followed by Rev. J. C. Meeke, who subsequently removed to Stockton-on-Tees and is now at Macclesfield. The Rev. Samuel Wood succeeded to the pastoral office in the year 1843, and remained at Lewes till 1848. Rev. Arthur Lupton became the minister in 1848, and was succeeded in 1850 by Rev. William Smith, of Stockport, who removed in 1855 to Ireland to undertake the chair of Natural History in the Queen's College at Cork. Rev. J. Robertson, now of Halstead, became the minister in 1855, but remained at Lewes only two years. In July, 1857, Rev. Thomas Carter, the present minister, entered on his pastoral duties. He also officiates in the afternoon of each Sunday at Ditchling. Of the warm interest he feels in the house of prayer of which we have offered this imperfect notice, a notable proof has been recently given in his undertaking, chiefly at his own risk, the cost of much-needed and substantial repairs and alterations. The chapel is now, at a cost of £500 and upwards, entirely renovated, and for its convenience and neatness may be deservedly commended. The improvements include a large and convenient room at the back of the chapel for the Sunday-school. An excellent vestry library, and another equally good for the Sunday-school, are amongst the several useful institutions of the congregation. The Unitarian public are shewing by their friendly contributions that they appreciate the zeal and right feeling of the Lewes minister, and the writer hopes that such of them as may read this account will be pleased with the opportunity of



sustaining a house of worship of which the antecedents are interesting and instructive. The foundations of the early Nonconformity of England are certainly entitled to our watchful and generous support.

Before quitting the subject of the religious history of Lewes, two other names may be mentioned in connection with it. For some years Thomas Paine, the notorious author of the "Age of Reason," resided here, and followed the calling of an exciseman. For him, English Nonconformity is under no responsibility. He belonged, so far as he professed any faith or observed any worship, to the Church of England.

In the garden behind the Jireh chapel rest the ashes of William Huntington, the "Sinner Saved." His epitaph, the work of his own eccentric brain, flings defiance now he is dead, as his voice did when he lived, upon all who rejected his claims to the honours of a prophet:

"Here lies the Coalheaver, beloved of his God, but abhorred of men. The omniscient Judge at the grand assize shall ratify and confirm this, to the confusion of many thousands; for England and its metropolis shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.—W. H., S. S."

#### UPWARD!

"Più elevato  
Nel affocato riso delle stelle!"—DANTE.

UNDER the canopy of holy thought  
I turn to Thee; and in the silent awe  
Of Thy felt presence, reverently draw  
Nearer Thy light; while marvellously brought  
Within a sphere diviner, I am taught  
New revelations and sublimer law  
Unearthly, and I see what prophets saw  
When on their spiritual souls Thy glory wrought  
The work of inspiration. Then absorbed  
In Thine own self, and all that's pure inorbed  
With an ineffable beatitude—  
Freed from all worldly taint, all element  
Unworthy—I become a light-beam blent  
In the grand Fountain Sun of Joy and Good.

JOHN BOWRING.

STRICTURES ON THE REV. PRINCIPAL TAYLER'S ADDRESS—  
MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE, OCT. 12, 1863. (Pp. 16.)

"Amicus Socrates, amicus Plato; magis amica Veritas."

SIR,

I KNOW assuredly that the Reverend Principal of Manchester New College will give me full credit for sincerity in the adoption of this sentiment of the great Roman philosopher, and will cordially sympathize with me in it. I feel, therefore, that anything like an apology to him for the friendly criticism which I now offer on his recent Address would be a revolting impertinence; especially as I must add that I feel constrained to this criticism by a strong and continually increasing conviction of what I owe to my allegiance to Jesus of Nazareth, not as a mere man, but as the Christ of God, for whose sake alone it is my endeavour to approve myself a faithful *servant* in the ministry of the gospel, after the example and in the spirit of the apostle Paul (2 Cor. iv. 5), renouncing explicitly the increasing tendency which I cannot but discern among some ministers, and which I see with the deepest regret, to make themselves, in opposition to the exhortation of the same apostle (1 Cor. vii. 23), "the servants of men." I cannot refrain from giving utterance to this remark as a solemn warning, but I distinctly and unequivocally disclaim all intention of placing my Reverend friend in this category; believing, as I have already stated, that, however divided in *opinion*, in *sympathy* we are one.

"In all the questionings of religious philosophy (writes my esteemed friend), the difficulty has been to find something ultimate on which the mind can rest as an indisputable reality" (p. 6). Quite true; and hence the necessity of a *special* divine revelation which, directly made in one age, has been faithfully recorded by those who immediately received it, and may be reasonably accepted, as thus recorded, in any and every other age. How is it, then, that Scripture is *not a primal authority*, as regards the substance, at least, of this revelation? The only answer which I can conceive is that which seems implied in the Reverend Principal's assertion that in regard to the authority of Scripture, as in regard to the authority of the Church, there is "an assumption but no proof" (p. 6). If this be really his meaning, I must distinctly but respectfully allege that there *is* proof, and, in my judgment, *abundant* proof to satisfy most, though not all, thoughtful and ingenuous minds which are in a condition to require it; but whenever this proof is brought forward, it has become the fashion with many Unitarian professors and even ministers to reject it with a sneer. As the consequence, we are thrown back on the unaided suggestions of our own minds to instruct us in the fundamental truths of religion. Not so, I can imagine my friend to reply. We have "the historical presentation" of Christ,

without which "we could never have formed any adequate conception of the change which the Spirit is capable of working in our humanity, and of the perfect union in which absolute self-surrender to its influences finally issues between God and man" (p. 7). Where, I ask, have we this "historical presentation" except in Scripture? But Scripture, my friend alleges, is not a primal authority; the acceptance of it as such is an assumption; there is no proof.

I have precisely the same objection to make to my friend's representation of the Scriptures of the Old Testament. After speaking of the possession of *monotheism*, i.e. the "view of Deity as one, as holy, as subsisting in the closest moral relationship with man," as that "which constituted the peculiar distinction of the Hebrew race, and has stamped its character on the whole of their history and literature," and alleging that "the whole Bible is a witness to this great fact, and there is nothing like it in any other history or literature" (p. 7), he takes no notice whatever of the *means* through which the Hebrew race acquired this "peculiar distinction," as the result of which their piety stands in contrast with the merely "æsthetic piety" of Greece and Rome, exalted infinitely above it. Yet presently after, my Reverend friend appears to me to go very near to identify the piety resulting from the influence of these Scriptures, or of the personalities exhibited in them, with this merely æsthetic piety. "The part of our nature on which this vivifying influence falls (he alleges), is not the understanding, but the seat of our moral sense and the affections—the soul; and the power which they exert is not that of abstract truth, but of the Spirit which gives to truth its moral quality and application" (p. 8). It is this exclusive appeal to mere sentiment against which I earnestly protest. Is it indeed true that Christ taught *only* by sympathy—"the sympathy which unites all spiritual natures"? (p. 9). Are there no appeals in Scripture directed immediately to the understanding? Is it true, again, that "when the point of view has been once reached which puts man's moral nature in the true relation towards God, it is a position which can never more be disturbed. It is as unalterable as the mutual relation of its objects"? On the contrary, I am prepared to maintain that, whether as regards the individual or the race, there never has been, nor is ever likely to be, a time in the world's history in which we could afford to dispense with any single aid which God has vouchsafed us for the maintenance of even the highest position which it is possible for us to attain. Few men have ever had stronger grounds for self-reliance than St. Paul; yet even he humbly writes, "*If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead*" (Philippians iii. 11); and, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. x. 12). Take M. Renan, to whom Mr. Tayler presently refers as illustrating



his views, as rather affording a striking confirmation of the truth and justice of those which I have adopted from St. Paul. He loses the very "principles of unsuspected power and blessing" which the "simple faith" of Jesus contains (p. 9), when he assigns to him a weak or wicked acquiescence in a pious fraud in connection with the alleged raising of Lazarus.

I think that Mr. Tayler is equally incorrect in his suggestions "against some of the earlier phases of Unitarianism" (p. 9). At least I could earnestly desire that some modern Unitarians would return to such a reverential sense of the infinite distance between the creature and the Creator as should root out for ever the impious presumption with which so many at the present day endeavour to place themselves, in imagination, on the very throne of God, discuss questions which it would once have been thought irreverent, if not impious, even to propound, and forget that though God is *in*, yet He is at the same time infinitely *beyond*, our humanity. In like manner must I protest against that confounding of a revelation which was once regarded as direct and special—the revelation in and through Jesus Christ—with the revelation which God makes of Himself in the spiritual experience of ordinary men, "who are conscious of his presence, and strive after a future of more perfect communion with Him" (p. 12). If Jesus were indeed the Christ of God, the revelation through him must ever remain the highest standard of spiritual truth, that standard by which all our ordinary human experience must be tried.

I profess myself altogether unable to understand wherein the views which Mr. Tayler next propounds of religion and the Bible are larger than those which have long prevailed among us, or what are precisely the improvements which he contemplates in what he calls "the old-fashioned husbandry" (p. 13). Equally obscure to me are his suggestions regarding "the public services of the church," so far as regards any novelty or improvement in them. One suggestion, however, is unmistakeably clear,—that we should "resolutely efface the artificial distinction between things secular and spiritual," and "must prove the identity of our mission with that of Christ and his apostles" (p. 14). Let this be fully accomplished, as by some self-sufficient teachers it seems likely ere long to be, and the result will soon be apparent in a thorough secularizing of all religious institutions and influences, and not at all in the sanctification of such as are secular. The tendency of the present age is to deify human nature and bring back hero-worship in place of the solemn worship of God. Justly, not sarcastically, wrote the late Elizabeth Barrett:

"——— The age culls simples,

With a broad clown's back turned broadly to the glory of the stars;  
We are gods by our own reck'ning, and may well shut up the temples,  
And wield on, amid the incense steam, the thunder of our cars.

For we throw out acclamations of self-thanking, self-admiring,  
 With, at every mile run faster,—‘O the wondrous, wondrous age!’  
 Little thinking if we work our souls as nobly as our iron,  
 Or if angels will commend us at the goal of pilgrimage.”

There are many other workers beside the workers in iron who need this solemn warning against the prevalent tendency of our age. Individually and personally, few men perhaps require it less than the excellent Principal of Manchester New College, if indeed he require it at all; but whatever tends, as his Address appears to me to do, to impair our reverence for Jesus as *the* Christ and for his gospel as a *special* revelation of divine truth, undoubtedly tends at the same time to foster this injurious self-sufficiency, and to flatter the conceit in which it originates. My sole endeavour has been, in these strictures, to resist this tendency, by upholding the special divine commission and authority of Jesus Christ our Lord, and by giving prominence to that thoughtful and humble reverence with which it becomes us ever to contemplate the perfections, providence and will of the infinite and eternal God. With unfeigned and cordial regard for the friend whose Address I have thus freely, but I hope also fairly, criticised, believe me, Sir, respectfully yours,

SAMUEL BACHE.

Edgbaston, November 16, 1863.

#### REPLY TO SOME STRICTURES ON MR. TAYLER'S ADDRESS.

SIR,

As this will, I understand, be the last issue of the Christian Reformer, and I should be thereby precluded from any future reply in this journal, I am much obliged by your courtesy in permitting me to see, with the author's concurrence, the proof-sheets of Mr. Bache's Strictures on my recent Address, and affording me the opportunity to make a rejoinder in the same number which submits them to your readers. The animadversion and the answer will thus have the advantage of being placed side by side.

To take Mr. Bache's objections *seriatim*. In his criticism of my statement, that "in all the questionings of religious philosophy the difficulty has been to find something ultimate," there is a confusion of *authority* itself with the *vehicle* of its transmission. The *primal* authority is God's mind manifesting itself to our humanity. Scripture is the simple record of such manifestation; and as deriving whatever authority it may possess solely from the evidence which it carries with it of conveying a divine message, can only be considered as a *secondary* authority. By

what test, I would respectfully ask, does Mr. Bache himself separate the *divine* from the *human* element in the multifarious contents of the Bible? I am sure he does not mean to assert that the mere occurrence of any statement within the limits of that book converts it at once into indisputable fact or certain truth. He must, therefore, possess in his own moral and spiritual constitution, some criterion for discriminating, singling out and appropriating the truth of which Scripture is the vehicle. And what is this but God's own gift, who has thus put the human soul in a condition to comprehend the outer Word and hear his voice within it? But that which is left to decide in the last instance whether a message be authentic or not, is surely invested with an authority above that of the messenger who brings it.

Allowing for the moment the stringent force of miracle as external evidence of divine authority, where, I ask, does this force apply? On what part, for example, of the gospel narrative does it specifically fall? It will not, I presume, be maintained by my friend that it gives a general, indiscriminate sanction to the whole of that narrative; that miracle is so fully established by historical proof, prior to all examination of the contents of the New Testament, that it leaves us no choice but to accept with submission as divinely sanctioned whatever is comprised amongst them. The miraculous element is dispersed irregularly and, as it were, without system, through all the historical books of the New Testament. It is not confined specifically to statements in which we could at once have recognized a divine communication; but not seldom it enters precisely into those narratives, such as the expulsion of the devils into the swine and the finding of the tribute-money in a fish's mouth, which some of the most religious minds have found the greatest difficulty in accepting as literal facts. Well, then, what is our position? Unless we are prepared to say, as a reverend friend of mine once said, whatever we find within the consecrated circle of canonical Scripture, we are not at liberty to dispute, but must admit without further question as divine truth (and this, I confess, seems to me the fair logical issue of the argument which lays such exclusive stress on outward miracle), we are only where we were before; we have still to use our reason and our moral and spiritual sense for distinguishing between different statements and determining what is and what is not divine. It is surprising to me that those who insist on miracle as the only certain warrant of a divine origin, do not see that the authority of miracle can never be higher than that of the narrative which contains it. If that be proved authentic and reliable, the miraculous element, whatever be its value, will subsist as a part of it. If from any considerations, external or internal, it be open to suspicion, the miracle will not save it, but only accelerate its rejection. God's own Spirit, silently working within us, brings us into sympathy



with the living Word which is its most perfect human utterance ; and through that sympathy enables us to lay hold with profoundest conviction of Christ, as "the way, the truth and the life." To such primal authority, Scripture, I contend, *is* secondary. But this is not to set up, as Mr. Bache's objection seems to imply, our wilfulness of opinion which is *human*, above Scripture which is *divine*, but to subject both to a far higher authority, that of God himself recorded uneffaceably in the fundamental laws and indestructible tendencies of our collective humanity. The words and acts of Christ himself, or rather perhaps the essential spirit of his being and personality, out of which they sprang, disjoined from the particular occasions that called them forth, carry with them an inward witness of their divinity to the native heart and conscience of man. The spirit that breathes out of them meets with spontaneous response in the better elements of the human soul. The divine within recognizes and embraces the divine without.

It is the fashion, I know, with some men to ridicule the stress laid on spiritual sympathy as mere sentiment, and to call for demonstration. But demonstration strictly speaking is not in such matters to be had. When faith is analyzed into its last elements, this sympathy is found at the bottom of it all. This it is which is final and determinative. You may establish an historical fact even with miraculous accompaniments beyond all cavil, and bring it home to the very door of the mind ; but whether it can become matter of faith must depend on this, and this alone, whether spiritual sympathy is there to welcome and admit it. That it is not the miracle which can effect its admission, is evident from this one consideration. Change the spiritual relation of the thing attested, to the human soul. Let it be something at war with reason or abhorrent to the moral sense. The miracle may remain in all its force ; but the thing which it warrants, will find no entrance. They will both stand outside the inner sanctuary of faith.

I never questioned, as Mr. Bache seems to imagine, the series of well-authenticated facts which prove the historical existence of Jesus Christ, and the introduction through him of a divine life and presence among men ; I never called this an assumption : but what I declared to be such, was the assertion of Catholics, basing the authority of Scripture on their Church, and that of Protestants, basing the authority of their Church on Scripture,—when both should have gone beyond their Church and their Scripture for the primal authority—that Spirit of God in which the Church and the Scripture had alike their origin. What I called, and still call, an assumption, was making the secondary a primal authority. The specialty of divine revelation which my friend asks for, is not to be sought ultimately in a book, which can after all be only a human record, and liable therefore to the

corruption and uncertain construction of all human records,—but in the personality of Christ himself, standing out from that record in the fulness of his divine life, drawing all religious natures through an irresistible attraction into sympathy and communion with his own spirit, and alone of all our race shewing the beautiful harmony that is possible between the human and the divine.

All through Mr. Bache's strictures, the gravamen of the charge against me is, that I lay so much stress on this spiritual sympathy as the ground of faith, and that I affirm the part of our nature on which the vivifying influence of the Scriptures falls, to be, not the understanding, but the affections, the moral sense, the soul; that the power which they exert, is not that of abstract truth, but of the spirit which gives to truth its moral quality and application. As this is really an important subject, and the main point at issue between me and my friend, I must be excused for dwelling a little longer upon it.

That Christ addresses us as rational beings, I have nowhere even by implication denied: I must be a madman to do so. But his form of address is never that of reasoning or argumentation. Whenever he speaks, he assumes the inherence of certain principles in our reason—such as the sense of our moral relation to the Heavenly Father, and of the retribution which awaits us after death—as the basis of all his appeals, as the ground of his expectation that he will be understood and produce an effect. The result of his teaching is to awaken our slumbering nature—to bring out into clearer consciousness and more vital power, elements of religiousness that were already latent in the soul: and this is done through that marvellous sympathy, that commanding attraction, which higher spiritual natures ever exert on the best qualities of minds inferior to themselves. The higher the nature, the more powerful the sympathy, the more resistless the attraction. The specialty of Christ, as we gather from his personal history and his lasting influence on human affairs, arose from this—that he possessed the power of inspiring this spiritual sympathy in greater perfection, and that God consequently spoke through him more clearly and distinctly to the human soul, than any other being of whom we have record in history. His gospel, if I may so express myself, was not so much put into us, as brought out of us. He did not create a new morality, nor, so far as religion can be grasped by the intellect alone, even a new religion, but breathed a new life into rudiments already in existence, by quickening man's sense of personal relationship to a living God. If my friend object to this, as an inadequate description of the mission of Christ, I ask him to point out what new doctrine—intellectually apprehended, as distinct from the spirit animating it—either of morals or of theology Christ has communicated to the world. The Sermon on the Mount is an expan-

sion and a spiritualizing of the prior teachings of the Law—its technicalities stripped off, its corruptions and perversions exposed, and its inner life drawn out into a few grand and comprehensive principles, expressing man's brotherhood with man and sonship towards God. All Christ's teachings, his parables in particular, are an outflow, drawn forth by the occasional demands of his daily intercourse with men, of the deep, indwelling religiousness of his own nature—a religiousness so deep, so pure, so concentrated and intense, that his life was an habitual communion with God, that he dwelt continually, in the beautiful language of the fourth Gospel, in the bosom of the Father: and it was in consequence of this intimate and uninterrupted intercourse with God, that he penetrated more profoundly into the spiritual relations of things human and divine, than frailer and coarser natures whose relations with God were broken and partial, and to whom the Spirit came not in serene and continuous flow, but in intermittent gushes of higher thought and nobler feeling. This, to the best of my interpretation of the phenomena recorded in the New Testament, constituted the specialty of Christ. The greatest of his followers, Paul and John, took up the central principle of his religion, the filial relationship of the individual soul to God, and developed it into new forms and applications with a fervour strengthened by their profound belief in their Lord's ascent into a higher life and continued spiritual presence with them on earth. But their work was accomplished by the expansion and fructification of spiritual elements already germinating in the world, which they moulded into social organisms, and wrought out into doctrinal forms, demanded by the moral needs and suited to the intellectual capacities of the times and peoples amidst which they lived. I am unable to find one doctrine of the New Testament, as distinct from some deeper spiritual principle underlying it, which is not shaped and coloured by the ideas peculiar to the age which gave it birth, and which any cultivated man at the present day would be prepared to accept under that historical form as a binding law for his understanding, however warmly he might sympathize with the spirit of religious trust and aspiration which glows through it.

If there were any doctrine in the New Testament which we might have expected *à priori* would be struck out in a permanent type, destined to endure unaltered through all time, we should have said, it was the doctrine of the Future which is to succeed the present life. But what do we find? So various, and in some points even so discordant, are the representations in Matthew and Luke, in Paul and John and the Apocalypse, that it would be impossible to harmonize out of them a distinct and consistent doctrinal statement of the fact; and with all these representations, however differing in other respects, there is blended the common expectation, which the event shewed to be



groundless, that the re-appearance of Christ from heaven and the opening of the world to come, would occur within the actual generation. What was present in the minds of those early believers as a principle of eternal truth, was the belief always latent in the human soul, and then quickened by Christ's spirit into vivid certainty, that a Future awful and solemn, big with the issues of a righteous retribution, *was* awaiting them beyond the confines of the present world. The *how*, the *where*, the *when*, each realized to himself in conceptions which his own mental idiosyncrasy suggested, or that came to him through the venerated traditions of the past. These were the *doctrines* of the day as distinct from the *principle* which they variously expressed; and they have been transmitted to us, not as rules for our faith, but as the historic forms of an eternal trust.

It has been said, that the doctrine of divine forgiveness on repentance and faith, is a doctrine propounded to the understanding which we owe exclusively to the Christian Scripture. And certainly no doctrine seems to me to flow so obviously and certainly from the central principle of Christian faith as revealed in Christ himself—that the normal relation of man to God is that of a child to a Parent. But nowhere in the New Testament do I meet with this doctrine set forth in definite and formal terms, as we should find it expressed in some modern system of divinity, and as the scientific intellect would demand. So little indeed is this the case, that one half the Christian world, all indeed who traditionally claim the title of orthodox, hold, and justify by a show of textual evidence, a doctrine the very reverse of that which is said to be so clearly revealed as a distinctive feature of Christianity. Scripture, it is strongly maintained by learned and pious men, insists on satisfaction and atonement over and above repentance and faith. I leave it to those who maintain with my friend that there is so plain and positive an enunciation of doctrinal truth in the Christian Scriptures, to reconcile this curious phenomenon with their favourite assumption—I can call it no less. Nothing seems to me vital and fundamental in the Christian faith, but sympathy with the spirit of Christ in his oneness with the Father God. When that sympathy takes full possession of the believing mind, and becomes a principle of inward life, it casts out from itself, by a sort of organic power, every extraneous element that has mingled itself with the pure spirit of Christ in the historical development of his church, and at once reveals and executes every stage in the progressive spiritual process through which the soul is redeemed, regenerated, sanctified and saved.

Mr. Bache has unaccountably mistaken my meaning, in supposing my allusion to "man's moral nature having reached a relation towards God which can never more be disturbed," to

imply that "we could afford to dispense with any single aid which God has vouchsafed us for the maintenance of even the highest position which it is possible for us to attain." Any one who reads the context with an unbiassed mind must see that I have asserted exactly the opposite of what is here imputed to me. I use the language which is so strangely misconceived, not to shew that we could ever do without Christ, but that his religion had reached a point in the revelation of human relations with God, which renders it impossible, in my apprehension, to go beyond or supersede it—that from the very nature of the objects between which it had brought to light the true and enduring relation, "it must remain with the human soul as a possession for ever." My allusion to Renan was to strengthen this statement by the concession of one whose bold and even daring treatment of the life of Christ left him open to the suspicion of no motive for making it but his perception of its undeniable truth. The expression of any sympathy with M. Renan was limited to this one point. Mr. Bache's words, if I do not misinterpret them, seem to intimate that my sympathies have a much wider range. I beg to say that my repugnance to M. Renan's offensive suggestion of Christ's possible collusion in a pious fraud, is just as strong and abhorrent as Mr. Bache's.

In referring to "some of the earlier phases of Unitarianism," I meant no disrespect to the many excellent men who represented them. But the profoundest respect for the men does not involve any intellectual or moral obligation to set my steps precisely in the footprints which they have left on the sands of time. I am only acting in the spirit of their noble example, when I take the liberty to say, that there were points in their religious philosophy which seem to me fairly open to the consequences which have been charged upon it, and which I know have had the effect of indisposing some of the best minds to adopt the Unitarianism once so generally preached in our churches. I can see no want of a "reverential sense of the infinite distance between the creature and the Creator" in the views which I have ventured with the deepest conviction to express. That in Christ we possess the highest revelation of spiritual truth, and that by that revelation our ordinary human experience must in religious matters be tested and tried, I admit quite as fully as Mr. Bache; but if this revelation is so special and so exclusive, so entirely disjoined from the universal laws of our humanity, as my friend seems to demand, I am at a loss to conceive what medium of intelligence and sympathy could possibly exist between us and Christ, and how in the failure of such medium he could act with a regenerating power on human souls. It is because we all stand in a common filial relation to God, vast as may be the interval between us on the spiritual scale, that Christ is fitted to be the

bearer of the Father's message to the world. If there were not something divine in each of us, we could have no power of discerning and feeling the divine in him.

With regard to the tendency of the views so obnoxious to Mr. Bache, to foster self-conceit and irreverence, I can only reply, that I do not find these qualities necessarily associated with any form of religious opinion that is honestly and earnestly entertained. In all cases, so far as I have observed, they originate in something peculiar to the individual. What there is in the consciousness of having a common spiritual nature with God and Christ—making us feel, as on no other supposition we can equally feel, that we are children of the One and brethren of the other—to inflate the mind with presumption and self-idolatry, I am wholly unable to comprehend. I should have thought that whatever deepened the sense of our mysterious relationship with higher Beings, by rendering us more acutely sensible of the awful weight of our privileges and our responsibilities, and the immense distance between our lives and our obligations, could have no other effect than to produce in us the profoundest humility, the most entire self-surrender to God, the most devoted and self-sacrificing endeavour to work out his holy will through the strength and guidance of his Holy Spirit—

Only seeing in his light,  
Only walking in his might.

Some of the humblest and devoutest men that I have ever known, have lived under the habitual inspiration of views which are said to foster arrogance and self-sufficiency. As for their leading to hero-worship and the deification of humanity, if they have any tendency to excess, it is quite in the opposite direction—to the annihilation of the human element and the exclusive exaltation of the divine: and the corrective to this tendency must be found in a due appreciation of the human media through which God speaks and works in this lower world. In prophets and apostles, in Christ himself,—nay, in all works of transcendent virtue and genius,—what we reverence and worship is not the human vehicle, which is always dashed with some taint of infirmity, which in itself is weak, worthless and perishable, but the glory of the divine shining through it which is indestructible and eternal. Nothing in this connection could be less appropriate than my friend's quotation of Mrs. Browning's forcible but not very graceful and harmonious lines.

I have that respect for Mr. Bache as a man and that perfect confidence in the rectitude of his intentions, that I am sure he has written from a sense of duty and with an earnest wish to serve the cause of truth. May I, however, be allowed to suggest, in conclusion, whether—in the present unsettled and divided state of theological opinion, when men in all sects and churches are searching for the truth with an ardour and an industry before



unknown, and pressing forward through different paths to the same spiritual conclusion—a closer union with God and Christ,—it would not be the wiser course for each to let the other take his own way, not indeed without discussion or exchange of thought, but without the anticipation of consequences which none can foresee, or the imputation of inward feelings of which no one is competent to judge; and both of which, as they are confessedly beyond our limited ken, we had better leave with devout trust to the overruling providence of God. If an opposite course be adopted, one imputation will only beget another, and there will be no end to the war of words and ugly names. If on one side there be charges of mysticism, vagueness, presumption and self-conceit; on the other there will be a retort of dryness, confined views and unfruitfulness; often, on both sides, with equal unfairness. Truth is very impartial in her favours. She is found entire in no one party; but has left some token of her presence with all who earnestly seek her. The spiritual progress of the world is wisely balanced between conservative and progressive tendencies. Some precious deposit is often left with the former, which in the haste of advancing steps might have been heedlessly cast aside. Some new glimpse of inspiring truth, fraught with boundless possibilities of future good, may be caught by the latter, which the caution of the former would have been slow to discern and afraid to seize. Let us, then, frankly acknowledge this; and in the great mental struggle in which we are all engaged, fall cheerfully into the places that we were intended to fill, and do the work which God has marked out for each of us. He is evolving out of our inevitable conflict some great issue that may possibly disappoint all our expectations. Let us patiently and reverently await that issue; and in the mean time remember that the earnest fulfilment of manifest duty and manly fidelity to clear conviction is the one thing needful for us all.

JOHN JAMES TAYLER.

*The Limes, Hampstead, November 23, 1863.*

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#### HERESY.

- WHAT right has any Government to dictate to any man who shall guide him to heaven, any more than it has to persecute the religious tenets by which he hopes to arrive there? You believe that the heretic professes doctrines utterly incompatible with the true spirit of the Gospel;—first you burnt him for this,—then you whipt him,—then you fined him,—then you put him in prison. All this did no good;—and, for these hundred years last past, you have left him alone.

SYDNEY SMITH.

## CRITICAL NOTICES.

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THE Editor, notwithstanding a considerable enlargement in the size of this closing No. of the *CHRISTIAN REFORMER*, regrets to find himself precluded by want of space from giving adequate notices of many volumes and pamphlets before him. Two or three of them, which have been for some time lying on his table, only awaiting a greater space than from month to month he found available, have pleasantly occupied many of his half-hours, and suggested topics of more than common interest. He must, however, content himself now with the briefest possible notice.

The fourth volume of Mr. Massey's *History of England*, comprising the last eight years of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, is replete with interest, notwithstanding the gloomy character of that portion of the reign of George III. The sketch of Erskine as an advocate in the courts of law of the constitutional rights of Englishmen, is most admirable. The admirers of William Pitt will find in Mr. Massey's impartial statements much that will discompose their idolatrous homage. If the friends of popular progress, unduly influenced by the disturbing influences of the French Revolution, transgressed constitutional limits, the First Minister of the Crown sinned in an equal degree though in the opposite direction. He saw at the outset the extravagance and folly of Tory alarms, but instead of allaying them by his own better knowledge, he made use of and exaggerated them in an attempt to put down his political opponents. Happily his aggression on free political thought and expression failed. Had the state trials of 1794 ended differently, the English constitution would have perished, or would have had to pass through the perils of another revolution. While avoiding the extravagances of some recent writers in applauding the native actors in the Irish rebellion, Mr. Massey describes with fearful force the cruelties and atrocious murders which were perpetrated by the underlings of the Government. It is startling to think that not three quarters of a century ago crimes were committed in Ireland in the name of law and government, as atrocious as those now being perpetrated by the Russians on the unhappy Poles.

The *Miscellaneous Essays, Critical and Theological*, by Rev. William Kirkus, LL.B., is a volume of singular ability and outspoken honesty. Coming from one who has till recently been reputedly "orthodox," and who still holds the honourable post, in succession to Burder, Palmer, Matthew Henry and others, of pastor to the first Nonconformist society in Hackney, it is a very significant symptom of the mighty changes which are going on in the religious world of England. The *Essays* are as lively and amusing as they are original. That on "Pulpit Fortune-telling" is a smart and witty exposure of one of the most successful pulpit charlatans of the day, Dr. Cumming. Those on "Preaching and Preachers" and on "Evangelicalism" are full of remarkable statements, the value of which is great as coming from one who well knows orthodox Nonconformity in its strength and its weakness. We find many things in the volume with which we cannot agree. Many qualifications seem to us needed in the author's praises of the Book of Common Prayer and his dispraises of Dr. Watts. Yet we must commend the volume as one of sterling value, and hope its author may be spared to produce others as worthy of regard.

*The Scholemaster*, by Roger Ascham, so carefully and learnedly edited by Mr. John E. B. Mayor, of St. John's College, Cambridge, is a true specimen of what an old English classic should be. It is delightful reading, not only as illustrating the ideas on education held by the wisest Englishmen three centuries ago, but from the curious autobiographical sketches with which it abounds. The little volume is beautifully got up, and does credit to Messrs. Bell and Daldy, its publishers.

*Religion in Life* is a volume of discourses and meditations by Rev. Edwin Smith, M.A., of Manchester. These sermons, though a little too ambitious in style, evince some originality of thought. The author is a confiding and grateful pupil of the present Professors of Manchester New College, and his views thoroughly accord with theirs on the theological subjects treated in this volume. His desire to exalt the religious sentiment has sometimes, we think, led him to put an undeserved slight on the intellectual processes of religious thought. In the sermon on "The Kingdom of God," Mr. Smith makes the startling assertion—one so little consonant with the fact—that Paul never once appeals to miracles as a proof of Christ's divine mission. *The resurrection, in the eyes of our new teachers, is no miracle*, though even Mr. Smith speaks of it as embodying the faith of the church in its still living Redeemer. But if there were no resurrection of the body, these are words without rational meaning.

*From Matter to Spirit: the Result of Ten Years' Experience in Spirit Manifestations, intended as a Guide to Inquirers*, is the latest publication of the school of spiritualists, who would put us within the power of every unscrupulous ventriloquist and skilful artificer in sleight of hand. The book in its details is as wonderful as the adventures of Baron Munchausen and much more amusing. Notwithstanding the grave asseveration of the writer of the Preface that "he has seen and heard, in a manner which should make unbelief impossible, things called spiritual which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence or mistake," we should decline to argue the question with him seriously. The triviality of the manifestations is enough generally to confute them. We may feel assured that when the Almighty shall permit the spirits of the dead to commune with the living, it will be for higher purposes than those at which our modern spiritualists have aimed. This class of books is useful as a warning, which in many quarters seems needed, not to abandon the *terra firma* of a sound understanding and practical wisdom in pursuit of the spiritual, whether in the common affairs of life or of religion.

*Consolatory Thoughts on Death* is the appropriate title which the Rev. T. F. Thomas, of Newport (Isle of Wight), has given to a devotional and affectionate discourse occasioned by the removal of one of our Unitarians, the late Mr. William Mortimer.

*Anathema Maranatha* is the title Rev. J. Panton Ham has given to an instructive and eloquent sermon on the Christian doctrine of retribution. The discourse, preached at Essex Street, is printed at the request of a hearer, the Earl of Zetland.

The publication by the Irish Northern Sunday-School Association of Mr. Bowring's *First Lessons on Natural Theology for Children* is an encouraging symptom that our Irish friends have not, in zeal for new and mysterious doctrines, deserted the old path of common sense and sound reasoning in which Paley walked with so firm a step.



Last to be noticed, but not least in our estimation, is the beautiful Sermon by Rev. John Hamilton Thom, preached at the chapel in Renshaw Street, Liverpool, on occasion of re-opening it after extensive alterations. The title given to the discourse is the *Witness of the Spirit*, but it contains much (and to us the more) interesting matter on general as well as local and personal topics. Few preachers equal Mr. Thom in the power of adorning their subject by originality of thought and beauty of language. Even where we are compelled to dissent from his doctrine, we cannot refrain from admiring the skill of the teacher. That he has in this discourse failed to convey to our minds a definite or satisfactory idea of the doctrine which gives its title to his sermon, is in part owing to the mysteriousness which, however regarded, must attach to the subject, and in part, we must be permitted to think, to the essentially mystical character of the form in which the doctrine is propounded. But one thing we observe with unmingled satisfaction, and that is, that, in our author, the doctrine of the Spirit is not a substitute for, or a reason for depreciating, the form of revelation which we have in the Scriptures. There is no reason why this doctrine should not be regarded as an open question among Unitarians. It may, however, be sometimes necessary to guard against the exaggerations of the importance of the doctrine, which lead to dogmatism, and seem to threaten us with something like a creed. Thus at the late American Unitarian convention, Rev. E. E. Hale declared the doctrine of the Holy Spirit to be the central truth of personal religion and the central doctrine of theology. It will be a strange thing if Unitarians on either side of the Atlantic adopt a creed which would put out of the pale of their communion all the writers, from Lardner and Priestley downwards, whom we have been accustomed to regard as our honoured fathers in the faith. Among several passages we had marked for quotation as especially excellent, is one in which Mr. Thom refers to monuments to the late Thomas Thornely, M.P., and the late William Caldwell Roscoe, which were first visible to the worshippers of Renshaw-Street chapel on the day when this sermon was preached. How felicitous and just the words respecting Mr. Thornely, "Honoured in his age for calm wisdom, for public service, for unstained purity, for life-long fidelity to all Truth"!

## OBITUARY.

Nov. 1, at his residence, Wood Street, Northampton, Mr. GEORGE HICKS, aged 45 years.

Mr. Hicks was a very valuable and highly-esteemed member of the Unitarian congregation in Northampton, and his death has caused a vacancy in the church which will not be easily filled. He was always willing and pleased to engage in any good work, and in all practical measures for the advancement of our holy faith he manifested a ready and hearty zeal.

He was emphatically a good man and a Christian. His religion was not confined to time or place or form, but shone out resplendently in the every-day actions of his life.

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Sincerely attached to that form of Christianity denominated Unitarian—and that as the result of earnest thought, calm inquiry and sincere conviction—he ever manifested the completest charity toward all who differed from him, and as a natural consequence he was highly respected by persons of every shade of religious opinion; while in the breasts of those with whom he was more immediately connected, that respect was ripened into heartfelt attachment.

He left home about three months since, on his usual business tour, in perfect health; and while staying at Hereford, about a month prior to his decease, he took a violent cold, which he unfortu-

nately increased on the following Sunday. From that time till Friday, the 13th of October, he continued to get worse, when he was brought home; but he never rallied, nor was he able to hold any lengthened converse with his friends up to the time of his departure. Calm and resigned during his illness, his end was peace; and the simple faith which so effectually supported him is now a rich source of comfort and consolation to his mourning widow, who, while she mourns his early departure, is cheered and sustained by the joyful conviction that her temporary loss is his eternal gain.

His mortal remains were interred in the General Cemetery on Friday, November 5, and on the following Sunday the Rev. Iden Payne delivered an appropriate discourse from Job i. 21: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." I. P.

Nov. 1, aged 82, at the Park, near Manchester, the residence of his son-in-law, Robert N. Philips, Esq., JOHN ASHTON YATES, Esq., of London. Mr. J. A. Yates was the second son of the late Rev. John Yates, who spent his life from youth to age as the able, eloquent and highly-esteemed minister of the Presbyterian congregation in Paradise Street, Liverpool. He was put to school under the Rev. W. Shepherd, of Gateacre, well known to the public by his learned writings, and whose school was frequented for a long series of years by the sons of the principal families in the neighbourhood with little distinction between Church and Dissenters. After being a schoolboy, Ashton Yates went to the newly-instituted Manchester academy, which in a few years assumed its present more ambitious title of Manchester New College. To the close of life Mr. Yates was one of its grateful supporters and principal officers. As a student he was under its first theological tutor, the Rev. Thomas Barnes, D.D., minister of Cross-Street chapel, Manchester. But for direct academical instruction he was chiefly indebted to the celebrated chemist and mathematician, John Dalton, who treated him not merely as a pupil but as a friend, so that in one of their vacations they made together a walking tour in the western counties. Ashton Yates was next apprenticed to the great North-American firm, of which the admirable patriot and philanthropist, William Rathbone, was founder and chief. Among his co-apprentices and co-equals in age were Thomas Thornely, afterwards M.P. for Wolverhampton, and Thomas Bolton, who, soon after the passing of the Municipal Reform Bill, was chosen Mayor of Liverpool. In

commercial, public and private life these three were attached friends to the end of their days, and they were all removed from this earthly scene within a very short space of time.

Mr. A. Yates's active habits as a Liverpool broker were varied and relieved by the study of literature and the fine arts, in which he met with abundant encouragement and assistance, not only under the paternal roof, but in the society of some of his neighbours, and especially of the great and good William Roscoe. He formed a very valuable collection of engravings and of paintings by old masters. These paintings still attest his knowledge and taste, forming one of the finest minor private collections in this metropolis. Mr. A. Yates also devoted great attention to political economy, making himself master of the subject both by reading and by conversation with the chief promoters of the science. In this line he published "A Letter on the Distresses of the Country, 1817," "Colonial Slavery, 1824," "Essays on Currency and Circulation, 1827," and "A Letter on the Present Depression of Trade and Manufactures, addressed to the Landowners and Farmers of the County of Carlow, 1841." At the time of their first appearance these pamphlets received warm approbation from Mr. Huskisson and many other well-informed politicians.

On the passing of the Reform Bill, Mr. A. Yates was naturally looked to as a man well fitted to work out and secure its advantages. He stood for Bolton in his native county. He lost his election from the unfortunate circumstance that, tried as he had been in every way as a supporter of Liberal principles, he was not Liberal enough for a very small section of the newly-enfranchised electors. These men proposed a young barrister, named Eagles, and obtained for him about 30 votes. This number, small as it was, turned the scale, so as to give a bare majority to Mr. Yates's Tory opponent, who was a manufacturer of great influence. At the next general election Mr. A. Yates was a candidate with Mr. Vigors for the county of Carlow, and they were returned together.

Mr. A. Yates's activity of mind and capacity for social enjoyment continued to within two years of his death. He then became a patient sufferer, losing his memory, but always gentle, kind and grateful to all around him.

J. Y.

(From the *Inquirer*.)

Nov. 9, at Brighton, WILLIAM STEVENS, Esq., of Canonbury Park Square and Bishopsgate Street, aged 36. A warm heart and an intelligent, well-informed mind

made him a pleasant companion and a sterling friend. None could know and not esteem him. His death, thus early, has caused feelings of peculiar regret in the hearts of all his friends.

Nov. 10, at Walthamstow, Essex, aged 66 years, JOSEPH BATEMAN, Esq., LL.D.

The late Dr. Joseph Bateman was born at Selby, in Yorkshire, on the 4th of March, 1797, where, after receiving as good an education as the place could afford, he was articled in 1811 to Edward Parker, Esq., solicitor. With that gentleman, of whose uniform kindness and disinterested friendship he ever retained the most lively recollection, he remained until 1821, when he came to London to a situation in the office of Messrs. Carr, solicitors to the Honourable Board of Excise, having previously, in 1819, entered himself in Lincoln's Inn.

He was called to the bar on the 27th of January, 1847, on which occasion Lord Campbell paid a high compliment to the zeal, intelligence and perseverance which had achieved so successful a career.

In 1829 a change took place in the character of Messrs. Carrs' office, in consequence of the termination of their appointment as solicitors to the Excise, and such of their clerks as chose were incorporated into the Excise service. From that date Dr. Bateman became a government officer, eventually rising to the principal clerkship of his department, and by the ordinary rules he was not eligible for further promotion. His character and talents, however, stood so high, that in 1846, the office of assistant solicitor to the Board of Excise becoming vacant, the late Sir Robert Peel selected him to fill that position, announcing the appointment in the following very gratifying terms:

"Whitehall, July 4, 1846.

"Sir Robert Peel presents his compliments to Mr. Bateman. He was very glad to have the opportunity of rewarding the long and faithful services of Mr. Bateman by a promotion not in the ordinary course, but well deserved by him."

On the occasion of the amalgamation of the Stamps and Taxes with the Excise, and the junction of the two establishments at Somerset House, he retired from office, finding congenial occupation for his legal talents in the discharge of the important functions of magistrate of the county of Middlesex, and unremittingly attended the sittings until within three weeks of his death.

From his earliest years Dr. Bateman had employed his leisure in the diligent pursuit of literature, and had ever some work in

course of preparation; and these productions were always works calling for a large amount of solid, hard, careful study and labour. He possessed the happy talent of almost intuitively discovering the most pressing need in his sphere at any particular time, and with earnest truthfulness set himself the task of supplying the want. Hence his early publication of the small but valuable "Highway Acts," which has gone through several editions.

From the date of his connection with the Revenue service he continually sought to improve the intellectual and general condition of the Revenue officers, not only by arranging and compiling short digests of the laws, but also by written essays communicating the mathematical information necessary to enable them to efficiently and intelligently perform the many duties devolving upon them. With this view he successively undertook, and carried forward to successful completion, the many works which render his name a household word among the Revenue officers. Of these publications, several of which were frequently reprinted, may be named, "The General Laws of Excise," "The Excise Officers' Manual," and the large, important volume, "Bateman's Excise Laws," referred to and quoted as the authority in the courts of law. Nor were his literary exertions limited to the numerous books which may be classed as professional. From their earliest proposal he associated himself with Dr. Birkbeck and others in the establishment of literary and scientific institutions, and by his own lectures and personal and pecuniary assistance greatly aided in the foundation and securing the prosperity of more than one of such associations. He became a life member of the Society of Arts in 1840, and for several years took an active part in the weekly proceedings of the society, and assisted on one of the Committees at the Exhibition of the year 1851. He was much interested in the British Association for the Advancement of Science, with which he became connected soon after its commencement; and several papers on scientific subjects contributed by him are to be found in its transactions. He was also a member of the Royal Astronomical Society.

As a tribute to his scientific and literary acquirements and works, the University of Giessen conferred upon him the honour of Doctor of Laws.

Diligent as was his attention to his professional duties, and arduous his devotion to literature, they were not permitted to absorb the whole of his thoughts, but in every way which a fertile brain and a kindly heart could devise, he aided those



in whom he discovered a disposition to help themselves; and for his counsel and pecuniary aid many will ever gratefully revere his memory.

One of the most peculiar features of his character was the extreme facility he had in attaching children and young persons to him. Of children he was remarkably fond, and entered into all their pursuits with a zeal and affection which won their hearts and immediately made all "at home" with him.

The religious phase of his character maintained its full vigour until the hour of his death, his principal occupation during several of the last years of his life in the intervals of his freedom from pain—and he was a great sufferer—being the preparation of a collection of Hymns (which he had stereotyped in order to their cheap sale and extensive diffusion), entitled "Hymns of Devotion and Duty, compiled and arranged by J. Bateman, LL. D.," price 1d. The collection contains 408 hymns, and the last verse in the little book accurately describes the author's condition for several years before his death :

"While here in the valley of conflict I stay,

O give me submission and strength as my day;

In all my afflictions to Thee may I come,  
Rejoicing in hope of my glorious home."

He was unable to attend the meeting of magistrates at the end of October, but retained a great deal of his wonted cheerfulness until a few days before his death. Only on the 9th of November was it apparent that he was in imminent danger; and before his friends who had been summoned could arrive, his spirit had departed home to God.

In obedience to a wish expressed by Dr. Bateman during his illness, his remains were deposited in the cemetery connected with the Unitarian church at Hackney; and the last words of respect and consolation were spoken by the minister of the place. He addressed the attendant mourners on the evidences which the career of their departed friend had given of energy and integrity, and of his being habitually under the guidance of moral and religious principle. Allusion was made to the useful objects to which the closing years of his life had been devoted,—the instruction of the people, the promotion of their morality and habits of self-reliance, and to the inculcation of those principles, feelings and tastes which would make the homes of the poorest happy. The recollection of these things, combined with the bright hopes of futurity which the gospel taught,

might well alleviate their sorrow and fill them with a good hope.

Nov. 11, at his residence, the Hermitage, Oxtou, Cheshire, FRANCIS MORTON, Esq., aged 48. The loss of this truly excellent man will long be severely felt by his sorrowing family and a large circle of friends. The remembrance of his active benevolence, his deep interest in all Sunday-school efforts, the liberal and continued aid he rendered to the distressed Lancashire operatives, and his other generous services in the cause of truth and righteousness, will long be cherished by all who knew him. The large voluntary mourning attendance and the deep grief manifested at his funeral shewed how affectionately and sincerely he was beloved, and how highly his piety, integrity and benevolence were estimated by men of all parties, classes and denominations. He was interred in the new cemetery at Bidston. The Rev. S. Martin, of Trowbridge, officiated on the occasion, and also preached a funeral sermon at the Hermitage Memorial building to a crowded and sorrowing auditory, from Hebrews xi. 4, "He being dead, yet speaketh."

Nov. 13, at the house of his brother, Parkfield, Kenilworth, after a long and painful illness, EDWARD COTTON, Esq., of Pall Mall, London. This benevolent and estimable man, descended from a long line of Nonconformist ancestors, was true through life to his moral and religious inheritance, and was a faithful supporter, both in religion and politics, of that fearless freedom which is the birthright of the liberal English Nonconformist.

#### THE REV. JOHN FULLAGAR.

The most aged Unitarian minister of the south of England, the Rev. JOHN FULLAGAR, sometimes called "their patriarch," has been called to his rest. He died at Chichester, November the 16th, aged 83, having been for forty-two years pastor of Baffin's-Lane chapel.

Of this venerable minister, whose services to the cause of Christian truth and philanthropy are well known to the Unitarian public, and whose active, energetic life has rendered his name familiar to a much larger circle, the pen of cordial friendship and warm esteem would offer a brief tribute of respect.

The Rev. John Fullagar was a native of Hackney, and was born in one of the large old houses known as the "Five Houses." He was an only son, and lost his father when he was but five years old. He received his early instruction in a large classical school under the care of Mr. Pick-

bourne, and afterwards completed his education at Mr. Paroissien's, where he had the advantage of more private tuition. One of his schoolfellows at Mr. Paroissien's was the late Rev. Baden Powell, whom Mr. Fullagar used to describe as then anything but speculative, and rather quiet and reserved, while he was himself continually applying to his tutor for information on theology and politics, which already interested him. He had from boyhood a love of science, and his pocket-money from early years was spent in the purchase of philosophical apparatus. His mother was a regular and attached hearer of the Rev. Hugh Worthington, of Salters' Hall; and the religious impressions made by his fervent oratory on her son, no doubt greatly influenced his future life, and were often recurrd to by him in conversation. He also had the opportunity frequently of attending in his earlier life, with his mother, the Gravel-Pit chapel, Hackney, under the ministry of the celebrated Dr. Price. He married, in 1802, Hannah, daughter of Edward Scales, Esq., of Stoke Newington, and after their marriage went with his mother to reside at Newport, in the Isle of Wight, where his only sister, who had some years before married William Cooke, Esq., of Bellecroft, lived. Here he formed the friendship of the Rev. William Hughes, formerly minister of Leather Lane, a kindred spirit, of John Kirkpatrick, Esq., and of other intelligent members of the Unitarian congregation. These friendships rendered his abode in Newport one of most happy reminiscence, and to his old island friends he was wont to resort when indisposition or overstrained effort rendered relaxation desirable in after life. In 1801, he was among the founders, and was the last surviving one, of the Southern Unitarian (or Book) Society, and filled the office of its Secretary from 1804 to 1815, in which latter year he assisted in the formation of the Southern Unitarian Fund Society. At Newport, in 1812, he was prominent in the establishment of the British schools, and took an active part in the promotion of the "Isle of Wight Institution for the Study of Natural History and Antiquities." But his heart yearned to become a Christian minister, to which his mother during her life had objected; and on her death he resolved to enter on the duties of that sacred office. His first theological publication, in 1814, was entitled, "An Attempt to Explain the term Unitarian," occasioned by a note in Dr. Gregory's work "On the Evidences, Doctrines and Duties of the Christian Religion," in a letter to that gentleman.

It was in 1815 that he was invited to

take charge of the congregation at Diss, in Norfolk. His inaugural discourse, "The Final Prevalence of Unitarianism, a Rational Expectation," was published. He established in Diss a Fellowship Fund and other useful institutions; and there formed an acquaintance with Emily Taylor, which continued through life. He was also intimate with Dr. Cogan, whose philosophical works he much valued. Among his literary friends I may enumerate Mrs. Barbauld, whom he has had the privilege of receiving as a guest in the Isle of Wight.

In 1818, he preached and published the annual sermon to the Southern Unitarian Society at Brighton, entitled, "The Worship of Christ unauthorized by Scripture." Shortly after, early in 1819, he was invited to become the pastor of Baffin's-Lane congregation, Chichester, on the removal to London of the Rev. W. J. Fox. He was persuaded to take this charge chiefly by his revered friend the Rev. Russell Scott, of Portsmouth, who entertained a high opinion of his ministerial abilities. It may be thought that his energetic character and advanced views on political reform, criminal jurisprudence, capital punishment, anti-slavery, oaths, unsectarian education, &c., better fitted him for a larger town, where such agitating discussions can be conducted without exciting the animus which is sure to fall on the individual who, mid the established regime of a cathedral city, dares to lift his voice for the needed changes. But though he might have been more highly estimated in a different sphere, he conscientiously entered on the discharge of those duties which Providence seemed to have marked out for him, and endeavoured, in a difficult and somewhat arduous position, to render benefit to his race. He continued at Chichester the same interest he had previously manifested in the support of British schools, and there originated the Mechanics' Institution, to which he devoted much time, and was always a popular and spirited lecturer, filling the office of a Vice-President, which was continued after its amalgamation with the Philosophical Society, to the time of his decease. His lucid method in explanation, and his aptness in performing experiments, rendered his services as a lecturer in natural philosophy much sought also by neighbouring scientific and literary institutions. He was always deeply interested in the afflicted and the poor, and was an active member of the Committee of the County Infirmary, which his friend, Sir John Forbes, had been the principal means of founding. He was also a Poor-Law Guardian, and one of the Governors of the Chichester Savings' Bank.

In 1822, he published a sermon, preached before the Sussex Unitarian Association, designated, "Christ's Account of Himself." In 1823, he published also six addresses "adapted to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper," which may still be found exceedingly useful in places of worship deprived of the services of a stated minister. Another of his published discourses was, in 1829, on the death of Miss Powell, entitled, "Adherence to Truth the Foundation of Moral Excellence."

During many years of his ministry he united with his brother ministers in the south in conducting doctrinal lectures on week evenings, during the winter season, in the neighbouring towns, especially at Portsmouth, under the auspices of the Southern Unitarian Fund Society. These ministers were chiefly his friends—the Revds. W. Hughes, W. Stevens, E. Kell and H. Hawkes. He was particularly fitted for this duty by the clearness of his argumentative style, and the zeal with which he supported his convictions of religious truth.

In 1834, his congregation presented him with an elegant purse of sovereigns as a testimony of respect, accompanying which much grateful attachment was expressed by them, and responded to by their minister with much warmth of affectionate interest in their welfare.\*

In 1836, he preached and published the annual sermon at Poole before the Southern Unitarian Book and Fund Societies, "On the Claims of Unitarians to the Christian Name." He was ever ready when attacked to defend his religious opinions, and finding that the Rev. G. Rankin, minister of St. Pancras, had denied the validity of baptism when administered by Unitarians, and asserted that he would not bury a child so baptized, he entered into a controversy with him, which was afterwards published, and no doubt operated favourably as a check to prejudice and bigotry. With ready pen, he was in the habit of sending communications to various periodicals, especially to the *Monthly Repository* and *Christian Reformer*, which from their commencement he held in high appreciation, enjoying the cordial friendship of their editors, the Rev. Robert and the Rev. R. Brook Aspland. I am not aware that I have more than one other publication to mention, viz. a sermon, entitled, "Reason unaided by Revelation not sufficient to discover the Perfections of God," in which he powerfully portrays the value to be attached to the divine mission of Christ, on which he was wont to say he anchored all his hopes of life and

immortality; and these were in him bright and glowing, and enabled him to support, with true fortitude and resignation, the trials of life, rendering the hour of his death peaceful and serene. It was a faith which never forsook him, but seemed to grow brighter and brighter as the gates of heaven were nearer to his view. He truly realized the Christian's belief—

There is a world we have not seen,  
That time cannot destroy;  
Where mortal footsteps have not been,  
Nor ear has heard its joy.

In a letter dated only Oct. 2, 1863, in reference to the great change, he writes,—  
"I know not whether the sand in the hour-glass is gradually sinking, or how long

Life is to keep its little course  
Ere death command the heart to rest;

but this I know—

All are thy messengers, O Lord, and all  
Thy sacred pleasure, Lord, obey;  
And all are training man to dwell  
Nearer to bliss, and nearer Thee.

So be it. You, my good friend, allude to my peaceful state, and that, happily, I have still a few ideas of the old stock remaining; and it is so, for I have not been altogether inactive in a small way, and have seen, though through many defects, of the travail of my soul, and am satisfied. I do not mean it as bragging, but it is only a few of the important, and, as I think, beneficial changes of the latter sixty years that I have had no hand in assisting; and now, as all but two or three of those with whom I worked are gone, quietly to ruminate on our work is almost my only, and in the circumstances a pleasant employment."

In a second letter, written to the same individual, November 2, 1863, he writes,—  
"One of the most interesting subjects of human speculation is the union of separated friends hereafter; but here, without discussing the how and the where all this is to be, I rely on our Lord's assurance 'that in his Father's house are many mansions,' 'that he was going to prepare a place' for his disciples, that 'where he was they might be with him'; and this remark seems to me to be of a general nature, and when coupled with certain expressions in the Epistles, to apply to all his sincere followers; and if we think—I repeat, *if we think* those who *are gone* are such, there is in our anticipation 'joy unspeakable and full of glory.' I ask not in what they are engaged at present, or how we shall rejoice together. I feel I cannot grasp the subject. But then I do not adopt the popular notion that our removed ones have necessarily ex-

\* See *Christian Reformer* for 1834, p. 492.



changed earth for heaven. The common exclamation, 'I've lost my friend, but, poor fellow, he is better off,' is much too incautiously used, in my opinion; but where the line will be drawn between the admissible and the inadmissible I know not; but I know what a wise apostle said, 'Give diligence to make your calling and election sure,' and here it is that the great deficiency appears."

In 1849, a division in the congregation, originating in the somewhat small question whether *standing* should be introduced during the psalmody, took place. This point, which might have been easily settled by amicable discussion, brought out some unkindly feelings, which terminated in a secession of a portion of the congregation to a General Baptist chapel which had been for many years closed, and in the choice of the Rev. John Hill as their minister. It was difficult for a pastor of Mr. Fullagar's affectionate nature to bear this severance of old hearers without much painful excitement; and to the close of life it continued a source of deep discomfort. About six years after this, his bodily, though not his mental, strength being greatly weakened, he gave up the evening service at Baffin's-Lane chapel; and in February, 1861, being then above fourscore, he was constrained by yet increasing infirmity to send in his resignation. It must have been gratifying to him that his own personal friends, without appeal on his part, shewed their respect and attachment to him by purchasing for him an annuity which more than supplied the place of the small remuneration he had received for his pastoral services.

When the aged pastor could no longer lift up his voice in the church, the remaining congregation, with few exceptions, joined their former fellow-worshippers under the pastorate of the Rev. John Hill. Time, the great healer, has done his work. The finger of death points to that home where all differences shall cease; and shall not the hope be cherished that the united church will rise above its trials, and, like some stream that has been sundered by an islet in its course, re-unite its waters, and mark out for itself a future earnest and prosperous?

He grew gradually weaker, but was only confined to his bed two days, and suffered no pain. Not many hours before death, his daughter Caroline said to him, "Dear father, you know, whether in life or death, *where* to go for strength;" and the emphatic way in which, though his strength was ebbing fast, he replied, "Indeed I do," gave a most consoling assurance that his mind was full of peace.

In the same grave with his beloved wife at the entrance of Baffin's-Lane chapel, according to his own earnest desire, repose the remains of the Rev. John Fullagar. This permission he obtained five or six years ago from Sir George Grey, then Secretary of State. His firm, true and esteemed friend, the Rev. J. P. Malleon, formerly of Brighton, spoke the last words of affectionate regret over his grave. The interment was without parade or show, but many attached and sorrowing friends gathered round to offer nature's tribute to the deceased.

Mr. Fullagar had nine children, four sons and five daughters; and during a considerable part of his ministerial life was engaged in the tuition of youth, in the advantages of which his own children participated. Among his pupils were the Rev. H. W. Crosskey, of Glasgow, and the Rev. R. Dendy, of the Missionary Board, Manchester.

The writer of this sketch regrets that small space of time and the need of brevity have allowed him to do very imperfect justice to the high abilities and character of the departed. He could have wished to have given many more interesting extracts from his letters, for he was a large and talented correspondent on all topics of public interest. His long life and acquaintance with eminent persons of his day had enriched his conversation with a fund of anecdote which rendered his society peculiarly agreeable and genial, while his large heart, his affectionate spirit, his urbane manners, created warm attachment in his friends. That he had failings which led him into difficulties that a less ardent temperament would have avoided, cannot be denied, for in humanity contrary virtues are in rare instances combined; but such failings will be overlooked and forgotten in the respect felt for one, who took his part bravely, manfully, in all which he esteemed of progressive light and knowledge, religiously, politically, scientifically; and who heartily and conscientiously lent his aid in every cause of suffering humanity, acting on the inspiring principle—

Thou knowest not which seed shall grow,  
Or which may die or live;  
In faith and hope and patience sow,  
The increase God shall give,  
According to His gracious will,  
As best His purpose may fulfil.

EDMUND KELL.

Nov. 22, at his brother's residence, 47, Prince's Gate, Hyde Park, WILLIAM COFFIN, Esq., aged 73.

## THE EDITOR'S FAREWELL.

WITH the publication of this No., the CHRISTIAN REFORMER will cease to exist. The Editor thinks the occasion will justify a departure from that reserve in respect to matters personal to himself which he has always wished to observe.

The CHRISTIAN REFORMER has now been before the public, in its three successive series, for nine-and-forty years. It was established in the year 1815 by the late Rev. Robert Aspland. The first series, in a duodecimo form and at a low price, continued for nineteen years. In 1834, it made way for a work of larger purpose, though bearing the same name, which for eleven years was edited by the founder of the Magazine. But previously to the appearance of the first octavo series of the CHRISTIAN REFORMER, the late Mr. Aspland had established and conducted for twenty-one years a similar work, the well-known MONTHLY REPOSITORY. At the end of the year 1844, age and sickness compelled him to bring to a close the editorial labours which had then continued without any break for a period of thirty-nine years, and as the fruits of which fifty-one volumes were in the hands of the public. At his earnest desire, sanctioned by the publicly recorded approval of nearly all the Unitarian ministers of this country, the responsibility of editing a third series of the Magazine devolved on his son. The present Editor has enjoyed the privilege of his office for nineteen years.

It is probably without precedent in the history of periodical literature that father and son have successively filled the editorial office through eight-and-fifty years, and without pecuniary remuneration have published seventy Magazine volumes. Small as is the share of honour in this work which falls to him compared with that which his father won, the present Editor records these particulars with fervent gratitude to the Giver of all good for the opportunities of usefulness he has enjoyed.

Many circumstances have during the last thirty years concurred to make the conduct of the Magazine a difficult and sometimes an anxious task. Other periodicals, having a somewhat similar object, and some of them conducted with singular ability by men deservedly esteemed, have made their appearance and divided the support of the denomination. Great changes of sentiment in philosophy and theology have during the same period developed themselves in some of the more eminent English Unitarians. The pages of the CHRISTIAN REFORMER have been always freely open to the statement and defence of the opinions held by religious men honestly seeking truth. Without freedom it was felt there was no security for the ultimate attainment of truth.

Combined with and as the result of habitual religious freedom, the Editor of the CHRISTIAN REFORMER and those who have most zealously supported him in his work have always upheld the supreme importance of Christianity as a divine revelation. While frankly admitting the

claims to attention of those who differ from them, they have sought to maintain the sufficiency of the proofs of a supernatural and miraculous Christianity. The CHRISTIAN REFORMER has advocated with all its power Unitarianism, believing it to be that form of Christianity which by a combined appeal to reason and scripture can prove itself to be the true Gospel, and maintain its just place in the understanding and affections. It has aimed to do this in no narrow spirit, but with a becoming respect for Christians of other denominations.

In reviewing the past, the Editor feels that there are some things for which he ought to be very grateful. From pecuniary loss he has been protected by a fund raised by the kindness of some friends, who thought the CHRISTIAN REFORMER was doing a good work. Nor can he in this connection forbear mentioning with respect and gratitude the name of his valued friend, Mr. W. Rayner Wood, of Singleton, the Treasurer of the fund. To the literary and religious friends who have so long and disinterestedly given him their aid, the Editor desires to express his most grateful obligation. To the kind and instructive intercourse he has been permitted to hold with many of them, he must, as long as memory lasts, look back with the pleasantest recollections. The services of one gentleman have been so constant and valuable as a contributor—often asked in circumstances of pressing difficulty, and never asked in vain—that he feels it to be an act of duty to record the name of his friend from youth upwards, the Rev. Edward Higginson, of Swansea.

It remains for the Editor to explain why he now retires from duty. He had long contemplated closing his editorial life on the completion of his twentieth volume, a year hence. This purpose was strengthened by finding himself, since his removal to the neighbourhood of London, called to many new and heavy duties, at a period of life when health and vigour are on the decline.

An intimation that the time had come for again asking the better support of the denomination has led the Editor, under the consciousness of inability for a much longer continuance of toil, to determine on the immediate discontinuance of the Magazine.

That the Unitarian body will soon find another representative Periodical, the Editor does not doubt. It is his earnest hope that it may worthily uphold a free and pure Christianity, and that it may receive a wide and liberal support. If the Unitarian body wishes for a good Periodical, they must first deserve it by their own generous confidence and help.

In bidding farewell to his readers, the Editor wishes to say how large and constant have been, during the past nineteen years, his obligations to the practical skill and conscientious carefulness of his printers, Mr. Charles Green and Mr. C. E. Green, his son.

B. BROOK ASPLAND.



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# HIBBERT TRUST.

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## SIXTH REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES,

23RD JUNE, 1863.

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THE Trustees, in recording such of their proceedings for the years 1861-3 as they deem to be of sufficient public interest for a report, cannot but regret that no candidates for scholarships presented themselves for the examinations which were announced to be held in November, 1861, and November, 1862. It is, perhaps, right to state, however, that one gentleman applied to be admitted as a candidate for the scholarship of 1861, but long after the latest day fixed for sending in such applications, and that the Trustees, feeling themselves bound by their regulations, were reluctantly obliged to refuse his request.

Mr. Upton is still a Fellow under the Trust—the fellowship to which he was elected in 1861 expiring at Christmas next. He has been occupied with studies in London since the date of the Trustees' last report, and in 1862 took the new degree of Bachelor of Science at the University of London. Mr. Coupland and Mr. Dare, whose scholarships terminated at Christmas, 1862, left England in the preceding year for the University of Berlin, where Mr. Dare remains; Mr. Coupland

having returned to scientific studies in England on the expiration of his scholarship. The Trustees have assisted Mr. Coupland and Mr. Dare, since Christmas, by grants in aid of their studies. Mr. Howse and Mr. Gordon still hold the scholarships to which they were elected in the year 1860, and they have this day been elected Fellows, their fellowships to commence on the expiration of their scholarships at Christmas next. After completing their Theological course at Manchester New College last year, Mr. Howse proceeded to the University of Göttingen, where he has since been pursuing his studies, and Mr. Gordon returned to Edinburgh, where he had previously graduated as B.A. ; he has now become entitled to the degree of M.A. of Edinburgh by examination there during the spring of the present year, and will in consequence receive a grant of £50 from the Trust funds in accordance with one of the regulations.

The half-yearly reports of the Fellow and Scholars during the last two years have been satisfactory, showing on the part of all a very considerable amount of reading and study, as well as of attention to pastoral and philanthropic duties whilst in England.

The Trustees stated in their last Report that they had, up to that time, been unsuccessful in their endeavours to transfer any portion of the capital of the Trust fund from the American securities, in which it was left by Mr. Hibbert, to others in this country. In July, 1862, however, considering the state of affairs in America, which had already induced the Trustees, in 1861 and 1862, to reduce the number of Scholarships offered to one per annum, and in consequence of reports presented by the Custodiers of the Trust funds, the Trustees sold the 50,000 dollars 6 per cent. Ohio Stock held by them, and invested the proceeds in the purchase of 4 per cent. Midland Mortgage Preference Stock.

The Trustees, having long contemplated such a step, and



knowing that it must necessarily involve a considerable sacrifice of dividend, have been careful, ever since the fund came into their hands, to invest, from time to time, all surplus income in Bank Stock and other securities in England, and the total value of these investments amounted at the close of the year 1862 to nearly £6000. They resolved, therefore, on completing the sale of the Ohio Stock, that this amount should be carried to the Capital Account of the Trust, and the result is, that the income of the Trust fund is now, notwithstanding the loss of dividend from America, as nearly as possible what it was, when it first became applicable to its present purposes on the death of Mrs. Hibbert in 1853. That part of the Trust fund which was invested by Mr. Hibbert in Philadelphia and Reading Railroad 5 per cent. Bonds has not been disturbed, and these Bonds are now the only American securities held by the Trust.

The Professors and Committee of Manchester New College have favoured the Trustees, during the last two years, with various suggestions as to carrying out the objects of the Trust. These suggestions have been carefully considered by the Trustees, who are of course anxious that the Trust fund should be applied in strict accordance with the very comprehensive provisions of the Trust deed.

The vacancy in the Trust, caused by the retirement of Mr. Price, which was noticed in the last Report of the Trustees, was filled up in December, 1861, by the election of James Kitson, Jun., Esq., of Leeds, as a Trustee. Two other vacancies have occurred since that date. At the end of the year 1861 the Trustees were deprived of the further services of Mr. Paget, M.P., whose Parliamentary duties prevented his due attendance in 1860 and 1861, and in November last the public duties of Mr. Stone, at Leicester, obliged him to resign his Trusteeship. In place of Mr. Paget the Trustees have been glad, in conformity with a provision in the regulations,

to re-elect Mr. Price, and they have this day elected W. J. Lamport, Esq., of Liverpool, in the place of Mr. Stone.

Shortly after the date of the last Report, Mr. Samuel Sharpe kindly consented to accept the post of Honorary Examiner to the Trust in Greek Testament and Scripture History, which was then vacant owing to the resignation of Mr. James Yates. The Trustees need hardly say that the high position, which Mr. Sharpe's learning in these subjects has won for him, has led them to anticipate the most valuable results from his assistance.

Two Scholarships are announced for competition in November next. The days of Examination will be the 23rd, 24th, and 25th of November, and no change has taken place in the subjects of examination.

CHARLES J. MURCH, *Secretary*.

University Hall,  
Gordon Square, London: